International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

Your university and the International Baccalaureate

SUPPORTING LEARNERS FOR A BETTER WORLD THROUGH EDUCATION

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, with offices in the Netherlands, Singapore, the United Kingdom and the United States.

Founded in 1968, the IB pioneered a movement of international education, and now offers four high-quality, challenging educational programmes to students aged 3–19.

Read more at ibo.org/about-the-ib.

Our mission

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, universities, 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.

Each year, the IB offers its programmes to nearly **2 million students** in **more than 160 countries** across the globe. Nearly **6,000 schools** worldwide are authorized to teach one or more of the IB's programmes.

About **50%** of IB schools are state schools funded by governments, giving many students access to a world-class education.

Benefits of the IB for universities

Why recognize and accept IB students?

IB graduates are set up for long-term success at universities. Many of the most selective universities worldwide recognize IB qualifications, and IB students are regarded as some of the highest performers in their areas of study.

Research shows that IB graduates tend to have more positive university outcomes than peers who have not completed IB programmes. For example, Diploma Programme (DP) and Career-related Programme (CP) students have higher retention rates than non-IB students. Read more about research on IB outcomes in Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States at ibo.org/research/outcomes-research.

- In a 2024 IB survey of university admissions officers, more than 70% of respondents indicated that IB students are "engaged and inquisitive learners" and have "in-depth knowledge of their subject".
- Nearly 80% of respondents in the same survey agreed that the IB ranks above most other education systems in preparing students for university.

Hear how universities value IB students

Where IB students apply to universities

Each year, the IB sends student transcripts to **4,500 universities** in more than **110 countries and territories** as part of their university applications. The IB supports students wherever they strive to go in the world.

About **80% of student transcripts** are sent to the United States, the United Kingdom, Australia, Canada, and the Netherlands. Many prominent universities in these destinations and beyond enrol large IB cohorts—including:

- University of Amsterdam
- American University of Beirut
- The University of British Columbia
- University of California, Los Angeles
- University of Cape Town
- Universidad de los Andes Colombia
- University of Florida
- University of Hong Kong
- King's College London
- The University of Melbourne
- National University of Singapore
- New York University
- The University of Sydney
- University of Toronto
- University College London

Most popular countries and territories where the IB sends DP and CP exam results

1. United States
2. United Kingdom
3. Australia
4. Canada
5. The Netherlands
6. Singapore
7. Spain
8. India
9. Hong Kong
10. Germany
11. Italy
12. Republic of Korea
13. Ireland
14. Japan
15. Sweden
16. Denmark
17. United Arab Emirates
18. Norway
19. Finland
20. New Zealand

(Top 20 destination countries and territories as of November 2024)

What is an IB education?

The IB has a distinct approach to education. Not only are its programmes driven by the belief that learning how to learn is fundamental to education—it also places a strong emphasis on its core value of international-mindedness.

Results of one study indicate that IB students in secondary schools across multiple countries around the globe showed higher levels of global mindedness than other young adults. Find the study at ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies.

The IB's four programmes

The IB offers four programmes that can provide a learning progression for students from age 3 to 19. The programmes are continually evaluated and adapted based on academic research and evidence.

Primary Years Programme

Primary Years Programme
For ages 3–12. The PYP curriculum framework begins with the premise that **students are agents of their own learning** and partners in the learning process.

Middle Years Programme

Middle Years Programme
For ages 11–16. The MYP is a challenging framework that encourages students to make **practical connections between their studies and the real world.**

Diploma Programme

Diploma Programme
For ages 16–19. The DP is a future-ready programme that **builds students' inquiring mindset and fosters their desire to learn, preparing them for higher education.**

Career-related Programme

Career-related Programme
For ages 16–19. The CP **equips students with future-ready skills and prepares them to pursue further education and career pathways.**

Several IB research studies have shown that DP courses align with and often offer more rigorous coursework than national curricula in Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Singapore, Spain, South Korea and the United States. Indeed, across all countries, the DP courses examined matched or exceeded comparisons.

Read more curriculum research at ibo.org/research/curriculum-research.

Fundamentals of the DP and CP

How does the DP work?

Students select **six subjects** from the DP subject groups and complete the **DP core.**

Subject groups

The IB has six subject groups. Each group has different courses, and students typically select one course from each subject group.

- Studies in language and literature
- Language acquisition
- Individuals and societies
- Sciences
- Mathematics
- Arts
- Higher level and standard level

Standard Levels
Teaching hours: 150

Higher Levels
Teaching hours: 240

DP students take both **standard level (SL) and higher level (HL)** subjects. SL and HL courses differ in scope but share core syllabi and curriculum and assessment models. Students take at least three (but no more than four) subjects at HL and the remaining at SL.

DP core

In addition to the six subjects, the DP core's **three required components** broaden students' educational experience and challenge them to apply their knowledge and skills.

- **The extended essay (EE):** An independent, self-directed piece of research, finishing with a 4,000-word paper. Students choose what DP subject is the focus of their paper.
- **Theory of knowledge (TOK):** A course in which students reflect on the nature of knowledge and on how we know what we claim to know.
- **Creativity, activity, service (CAS):** Activities and/or projects that relate to one or more of these three concepts.

Example DP subject choices

The medic*

1: Spanish A: Language and literature SL
2: English B HL
3: Physics SL
4: Chemistry HL
5: Mathematics: analysis and approaches (AA) SL
6: Biology HL
Extended Essay: Biology

The creative

1: Literature and performance SL
2: Hindi B HL
3: Digital Society SL
4: Design technology HL
5: Mathematics: applications and interpretation (AI) SL
6: Theatre HL
Extended Essay: Theatre

The engineer

1: English A: Language and literature SL
2: German B SL
3: Economics HL
4: Physics HL
5: Mathematics: AA HL
6: Music SL
Extended Essay: Physics

The social scientist

1: German A: Language and literature HL
2: Portuguese B SL
3: Global politics HL
4: Environmental systems and society SL
5: Mathematics: AI SL
6: Geography HL
Extended Essay: History

*Sometimes students are allowed to take the **non-regular diploma** if universities require a certain combination of subjects. In this example, the student is taking mathematics and three science courses.

DP course students

About half of all IB students enrol in individual DP courses rather than completing the full DP. Many of these students are based in public schools in the USA. DP course students sit the same exams as DP students and are assessed to the same rigorous standards. Further, research on IB outcomes shows that DP course students in the USA enrolled in, persisted at and graduated from university at higher rates than the national average.

These students focus on select DP courses for a variety of reasons, such as:

- their high schools only offer a limited number of DP courses
- the courses do not meet all criteria for the full Diploma Programme
- they wish to select certain DP courses and use the results to gain credit or advanced standing at their chosen university.

Core competencies for university study

Mathematics skills

DP mathematics courses support the reality of what students need to know to be successful at university and beyond. Studies show that both higher level and standard level DP mathematics courses align with, and commonly surpass in demand, mathematics courses in a number of countries' education systems.

Recognizing DP mathematics

Language proficiencies

DP language courses provide students with a level of proficiency that prepares them to study at university. Research has found that both higher level and standard level DP language courses are comparable to CEFR B2 in English, French, Spanish and German.

Benchmarking selected IB language courses

How does the CP work?

Students select **at least two DP courses** at either HL or SL, the **CP core,** and complete a **career-related study (CRS).**

CP core

The CP core includes **four required components:**

- personal and professional skills
- community engagement
- the reflective project
- language and cultural studies.

These components enhance students' personal and interpersonal development, with an emphasis on experiential learning.

Career-related study

Through the career-related study (CRS), students complete practical, industry-led learning with an organization such as a university or another awarding body. The CRS is designed to prepare students for university, an internship or apprenticeship, or a position in a designated field of interest, through practice-based education.

The career-related study **must satisfy IB criteria for accreditation, assessment and quality assurance.**

CRS Strategic Providers are specific providers whose career-related studies have been identified as offering the potential to be implemented by a wide range of CP schools.

- Arizona State University (ASU)
- Association of Chartered Certified Accountants (ACCA)
- Microsoft Corporation
- Pearson
- Savannah College of Art & Design (SCAD)
- Sustainability Management School (SUMAS)
- Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla (UPAEP)
- World Academy of Sport (WAoS)

In the USA, it is common for CP schools to implement state-level Career Technical Education (CTE) as their CRS provider.

One study in the USA found that students who have completed the CP enrol in college at higher rates than the national average and persist and graduate within six years at notably higher rates than the national average.

Read more about CP outcomes research at ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/cp-studies.

Example CP subject choices

The healthcare professional

DP course: Chemistry SL

DP course: Mathematics: analysis and approaches HL

DP course: Biology SL

CRS: CTE: Academy of Health Professions and Bioscience: Certified Nursing Assistant

CP core: Aiming to study nursing at a state college in the United Statesç

The IT professional

DP course: Physics SL

DP course: Design technology SL

DP course: Mathematics: analysis and approaches SL

CRS: CP/BTEC Level 3 IT

CP core: Aiming to study IT at a University of Applied Sciences in The Netherlands

The arts aficionado

DP course: Arts HL

DP course: History SL

CRS: Savannah College of Art and Design

CP core: Aiming to study Art History at a Liberal Arts college in the United States

The entrepreneur

DP course: Business management HL

DP course: Economics HL

DP course: Mathematics: applications and interpretation SL

CRS: Sustainability Management School (SUMAS): Business & Sustainability

CP core: Aiming to study social business entrepreneurship at a UK university

Understanding assessment and awarding

Assessment and grades in the MYP, DP and CP

The IB uses both internal and external assessment.

External assessment: Graded by IB examiners outside of the school.

- Examples: Exams that include essays, data-response questions, case-study questions, short-response questions.

Internal assessment: Graded by teachers in the school and moderated by the IB. After teachers have graded the internal assessments, an IB examiner reviews a sample of teacher-assessed coursework to establish whether the teacher-awarded marks are correct.

- Examples: Oral presentation based on a selection of source material, scientific investigation addressing an original line of inquiry, fieldwork.

Awarding the MYP certificate

The IB understands that entry to universities in certain countries may require students to earn a national or standard qualification at age 16. Most schools that offer the MYP complete all programme assessment requirements internally and use local transcripts to report student achievement. However, many of the IB World Schools in the countries with age-16 qualifications offer their students the opportunity to also earn the **MYP certificate** through the eAssessment.

The eAssessment, offered by about 10% of schools with MYP programmes, is a set of 8 external assessments that includes exams and coursework review. Students who gain at least **28 points** on their eAssessments are awarded the MYP certificate. The maximum number of points is 56, as each eAssessment grade ranges from 7 to 1 (with 7 being the highest).

Research has found that MYP assessment is comparable to the UK's General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) in terms of the skills and content assessed. Read more about MYP outcomes ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/myp-studies.

Awarding the IB Diploma and IB Career-related Programme certificate

Students must meet a number of conditions—such as achieving certain minimum grades and fulfilling programme core requirements—to pass the DP and earn the IB Diploma, or to pass the CP and earn the IB Career-related Programme certificate. DP and CP students also may earn bilingual certificates by meeting additional language requirements.

Take the IB 101 learning module to learn about passing criteria and more

IB Diploma points

A key factor in awarding the IB Diploma is the number of points students gain. Students who gain at least **24 points,** with at least 12 from HL subjects, can achieve the Diploma. Students receive grades ranging from 7 to 1 (with 7 being the highest) for each course they take. A student's final IB Diploma result score is made up of the combined scores for each subject.

Higher Level (HL) x 3 subjects	Standard Level (SL) x 3 subjects	Extended Essay (EE)	Theory of Knowledge (TOK)
7	7	A	A
6	6	B	B
5	5	C	C
4	4	D	D
3	3	E	E
2	2		
1	1		
max 21	max 21	maximum 3 points combined	

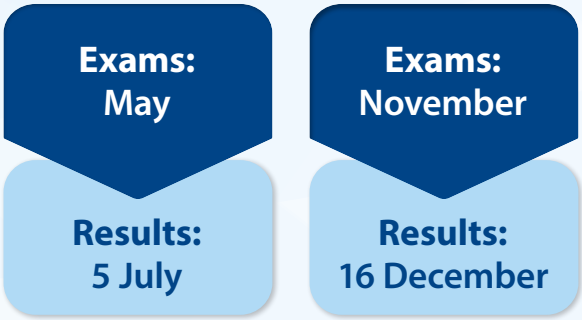
The **maximum** score is **45**. Students score around **30 points on average,** and just **10% of students** score **40 points** or **more.**

For more detailed breakdowns of scores view our statistical bulletins at ibo.org/about-the-ib/facts-and-figures/statistical-bulletins.

About DP and CP examinations

Exam timelines

There are **two exam sessions** available in each calendar year, as schools in different geographic locations operate on different academic year timelines.



How universities receive IB exam results

Transcripts reflect students' final results and are **issued by the IB**, not the school.

The IB provides a secure online platform for university admissions staff to access transcripts. While the IB can send paper transcripts in the mail, opting in to receive transcripts **electronically** allows universities to download them immediately after they become available. Nearly **90% of transcripts are sent electronically.**

Why set credit and recognition policies?

Your recognition policy, also referred to as admissions or entry requirements, defines how your university values and understands IB graduates.

By developing a clear and transparent IB recognition policy, your university gains a valuable opportunity to **attract both domestic and international IB students** who already have taken university-level coursework—and raise the academic standard, internationalization and diversity of your community.

Clearly stating your admission requirements for IB students helps them understand that you will consider them for admission and may offer credits or advanced standing where appropriate.

Showcase your recognition statement on the IB's database

The IB's Recognition Statements Database is a key resource for IB students—as well as those who support them, including counsellors and parents—in their search for universities. Publishing a recognition statement will increase your visibility and help you market your institution among these university-ready students.

Nearly 85% of all student transcripts that the IB sends go to institutions with a presence on the Recognition Statements Database. Join about 1,500 universities—and counting—around the globe that have added their recognition statements.

Add your university's recognition policy to the IB Recognition Statements Database

Get in touch with us

Contact recognition@ibo.org to connect with the IB Global Recognition team for support with establishing your recognition policies, understanding assessment, receiving transcripts and more. We look forward to working with you.

Support for university understanding

The IB continually supports universities' understanding of IB curriculum by creating guides and resources.

Get familiar with IB curriculum

- IB 101 learning module about the IB programmes and assessment
- Guide to understanding IB mathematics
- DP subject groups and individual subject information
- Teaching guides for DP subjects
- CP curriculum information

View links to these resources

Attract and support IB students

- How to develop and publish a recognition statement
- University admissions newsletter sign-up (sent three times per year)
- Guidance on how to receive and evaluate IB transcripts

Read recommendations and research

- ACE recommendations on granting credit for IB courses
- IB language course alignment with CEFR and language-specific proficiency tests
- Outcomes research: Impact of IB programmes on teachers, schools and students

Other ways to work with the IB

Collaborative review of IB subjects

The IB regularly undertakes a comprehensive review of its programmes, as well as specific subjects, in close collaboration with educational experts from higher education institutions. Interested university faculty members can contact dpdevelopment@ibo.org.

IB educator certificates

The IB ensures educators are prepared to teach and lead in IB World Schools through IB-recognized university/college degree programmes that meet the qualifications for an IB educator certificate (IBEC). Higher education institutions can partner with the IB to align their teaching and educational leadership programmes with the IB's mission, vision and pedagogy. Learn more at ibo.org/ibec-universities.

International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional