

Diploma Programme Requirements and Course Offerings

Graduation May, 2020

On the pages that follow, there are short descriptions of the courses offered in the Diploma Programme for students graduating in May, 2020. These have been adapted from the IB Course Guides.

Course Selection Requirements

Students must select six courses across the six different groups: (1) Language & Literature, (2) Language Acquisition, (3) Individuals and Societies, (4) Sciences, (5) Mathematics, and (6) Arts. In lieu of a group 6 (Arts) course, students may select to take an extra course in one of the other groups. A student may also choose to take two courses in group 1 to fulfil their group 2 requirement.

In addition to selecting the courses, students should identify the level at which they would like to study the course. Students should discuss the appropriate level with their teacher, and obtain their signature on the Diploma Options and Course Selection Form.

Students pursuing the full IB Diploma must select three courses at standard level and three at the higher level. Those who are pursuing IB Courses and the ISL diploma have flexibility in the levels they select.

Next to the course descriptions, the levels at which the courses are offered are indicated. Please see descriptions of the variations in the levels in the table below.

LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
ISL Level	This level of course is designed for students who are interested in a subject and would like to take it for ISL credit only. The course curriculum is derived from the IB course guide for the relevant subject, and supports the development of key skills and concepts within the discipline. It is designed for students who would like to have a more flexible approach to assessment and are pursuing diploma option 1 or 2.
<p>Standard Level</p> <p>Higher Level</p>	<p>Both Standard (SL) and Higher (HL) level courses are meant to span the two years of the Diploma Programme. SL courses are recommended to have at least 150 hours of instructional time, and HL courses are recommended to have at least 240 instructional hours.</p> <p>In most cases both SL and HL courses consist of the same educational aims, core syllabus and curriculum and assessment models. HL courses typically also include a range of additional elements designed to allow students to explore areas of interest within the subject in more depth. In this sense, SL courses are not watered down versions of their HL counterparts. The assessment criteria are equally demanding for both levels, and SL exams are marked and standardized with the same rigour as all IB coursework.¹</p>

¹ This description is taken from the IBO publication: *International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Standard level and higher level course*. <http://www.ibo.org/globalassets/publications/recognition/slhl-brief-en.pdf>.

Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature

Language A Language and Literature - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

Languages Offered: English & Russian

The Language and Literature course consists of four parts—two relate to the study of language and two to the study of literature. A study of language and culture is vital to how we see and understand the world in which we live. A key aim of this course is to question the meaning generated by language and texts, which, it can be argued, is rarely straightforward and unambiguous. The course also aims to develop skills of textual analysis and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary, can be seen as autonomous yet simultaneously related to culturally determined reading practices.

The Language and Literature course does not limit the study of texts to the products of one culture or of the cultures covered by any one language. The study of literature in translation from other cultures is especially important to IB Diploma Programme students because it contributes to a global perspective, thereby promoting an insight into, and understanding of, the different ways in which cultures influence and shape the experiences of life common to all humanity.

School-Supported Self-Taught Language A Literature - SL Only

Languages Offered: Varied

This is a literature course that is studied in a native language other than English. Several works of literature are studied in the native language, with IB assessments such as essays, recorded oral presentations and the final IB exams. The student is supported at school by a teacher who can instruct them in the mechanics of the course and the skills needed for success in the course. The student should also seek support from a private tutor who guides them in the continued development of the target language and the application of the intended skills.

Group 2: Language Acquisition

Language B - Levels Offered SL/HL

Languages Offered - English, French, Russian

Language B is for students who have some experience already with the target language. This course is best suited for students who have the proficiency of level of A2 and are beginning B1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

The main focus of Language B is on development of reading, writing, listening and speaking. These language skills are developed through the study and use of a range of written and spoken material. Such material will extend from everyday oral exchanges to literary texts, and should be related to the culture(s) of countries where the language is spoken. Material is chosen to enable students to develop mastery of language skills and intercultural understanding.

Language ab initio - Levels Offered ISL/SL

Language Offered - French

Language ab initio is for students who have limited exposure to the language or a proficiency level of A1 on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages.

The main focus of Language ab initio is to provide the students with opportunities to practise and explore the language as well as to develop intercultural understanding. Through the development of receptive, productive and interactive skills, students should be able to respond and interact appropriately in a defined range of everyday situations.

Please note that teacher recommendation is a requirement if a student has previous French language experience.

Group 3: Individuals and Societies

Economics - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

Economics is a dynamic social science. The study of economics is essentially about dealing with scarcity, resource allocation and the methods and processes by which choices are made in the satisfaction of human wants. As a social science, economics uses scientific methodologies that include quantitative and qualitative elements. The IB Diploma Programme economics course emphasizes both the economic theories of microeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting individuals, firms and markets, and the economic theories of macroeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting countries, governments and societies. These are applied to real-world issues.

The ethical dimensions involved in the application of economic theories and policies permeate throughout the economics course as students are required to consider and reflect on human end-goals and values. The economics course encourages students to develop international perspectives, fosters a concern for global issues, and raises students' awareness of their own responsibilities at a local, national and international level.

History - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

History is more than the study of the past. It is the process of recording, reconstructing, and interpreting the past through the investigation of a variety of sources. It is a discipline that gives people an understanding of themselves and others in relation to the world, both past and present.

Students of history should learn how the discipline works. It is an exploratory subject that poses questions without providing definitive answers. In order to understand the past, students must engage with it both through exposure to primary historical sources and through the work of historians. Historical study involves both selection and interpretation of data and critical evaluation of it. Students of history should appreciate the relative nature of historical knowledge and understanding, as each generation reflects its own world and preoccupations and as more evidence emerges. A study of history both requires and develops an individual's understanding of, and empathy for, people living in other periods and contexts.

Psychology - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

Psychology is the systematic study of behaviour and mental processes. Psychology has its roots in both the natural and social sciences, leading to a variety of research designs and applications, and providing a unique approach to understanding modern society.

IB psychology examines the interaction of biological, cognitive and sociocultural influences on human behaviour, thereby adopting an integrative approach. Understanding how psychological knowledge is generated, developed and applied enables students to achieve a greater understanding of themselves and appreciate the diversity of human behaviour. The ethical concerns raised by the methodology and application of psychological research are key considerations in IB psychology.

Group 4: Sciences

Biology - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

Biology is the study of life. The first organisms appeared on the planet over 3 billion years ago and, through reproduction and natural selection, have given rise to the 8 million or so different species alive today. This diversity makes biology both an endless source of fascination and a considerable challenge.

An interest in life is natural for humans; not only are we living organisms ourselves, but we depend on many species for our survival, are threatened by some and co-exist with many more. Biologists attempt to understand the living world at all levels using many different approaches and techniques. At one end of the scale is the cell, its molecular construction and complex metabolic reactions. At the other end of the scale biologists investigate the interactions that make whole ecosystems function.

Chemistry - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

Chemistry is an experimental science that combines academic study with the acquisition of practical and investigational skills. It is often called the central science, as chemical principles underpin both the physical environment in which we live and all biological systems. Apart from being a subject worthy of study in its own right, chemistry is a prerequisite for many other courses in higher education, such as medicine, biological science and environmental science, and serves as useful preparation for employment.

The Diploma Programme chemistry course allows students to develop traditional practical skills and techniques and to increase facility in the use of mathematics, which is the language of science. It also allows students to develop interpersonal skills, and digital technology skills, which are essential in 21st century scientific endeavour and are important life-enhancing, transferable skills in their own right.

Physics - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

Physics is the most fundamental of the experimental sciences, as it seeks to explain the universe itself from the very smallest particles—currently accepted as quarks, which may be truly fundamental—to the vast distances between galaxies.

Despite the exciting and extraordinary development of ideas throughout the history of physics, certain aspects have remained unchanged. Observations remain essential to the very core of physics, sometimes requiring a leap of imagination to decide what to look for. Models are developed to try to understand observations, and these themselves can become theories that attempt to explain the observations. Theories are not always directly derived from observations but often need to be created. At the school level both theory and experiments should be undertaken by all students. They should complement one another naturally, as they do in the wider scientific community.

Group 5: Mathematics

Mathematics HL

IB Mathematics HL is a course for students with a very strong background in mathematics and strong analytical and technical skills. This is for students who will be including mathematics in their university studies, either as a subject in its own right or within courses such as physics, engineering and technology. The course is also for students who have a strong interest in mathematics and enjoy meeting its challenges.

Mathematics SL

This course caters for students who already possess knowledge of basic mathematical concepts, and who are equipped with the skills needed to apply simple mathematical techniques correctly. The majority of these students will expect to need a sound mathematical background as they prepare for future studies in subjects such as chemistry, economics, psychology and business administration.

Mathematical Studies SL or ISL

This course has an emphasis on applications of mathematics, and the largest section is on statistical techniques. It is designed for students with varied mathematical backgrounds and abilities. It offers students opportunities to learn important concepts and techniques and to gain an understanding of a wide variety of mathematical topics. It prepares students to be able to solve problems in a variety of settings, to develop more sophisticated mathematical reasoning and to enhance their critical thinking. The individual project is an extended piece of work based on personal research involving the collection, analysis and evaluation of data. Students taking this course are well prepared for a career in social sciences, humanities, languages or arts. These students may need to utilize the statistics and logical reasoning that they have learned as part of the mathematical studies SL course in their future studies

Group 6: The Arts

Visual Arts - Levels Offered ISL/SL/HL

The visual arts are an integral part of everyday life, permeating all levels of human creativity, expression, communication and understanding. They range from traditional forms embedded in local and wider communities, societies and cultures, to the varied and divergent practices associated with new, emerging and contemporary forms of visual language. They may have socio-political impact as well as ritual, spiritual, decorative and functional value; they can be persuasive and subversive in some instances, enlightening and uplifting in others. We celebrate the visual arts not only in the way we create images and objects, but also in the way we appreciate, enjoy, respect and respond to the practices of art-making by others from around the world. Theories and practices in visual arts are dynamic and ever-changing, and connect many areas of knowledge and human experience through individual and collaborative exploration, creative production and critical interpretation.

The IB Diploma Programme visual arts course encourages students to challenge their own creative and cultural expectations and boundaries. It is a thought-provoking course in which students develop analytical skills in problem-solving and divergent thinking, while working towards technical proficiency and confidence as art-makers. In addition to exploring and comparing visual arts from different perspectives and in different contexts, students are expected to engage in, experiment with and critically reflect upon a wide range of contemporary practices and media. The course is designed for students who want to go on to study visual arts in higher education as well as for those who are seeking lifelong enrichment through visual arts.

CORE: Theory of Knowledge

TOK is a course about critical thinking and inquiring into the process of knowing, rather than about learning a specific body of knowledge. It is a core element which all Diploma Programme students undertake.

TOK and the Diploma Programme subjects should support each other in the sense that they reference each other and share some common goals. The TOK course examines how we know what we claim to know. It does this by encouraging students to analyse knowledge claims and explore knowledge questions. A knowledge claim is the assertion that “I/we know X” or “I/we know how to Y”, or a statement about knowledge; a knowledge question is an open question about knowledge. A distinction between shared knowledge and personal knowledge is made in the TOK guide. This distinction is intended as a device to help teachers construct their TOK course and to help students explore the nature of knowledge.

CORE: Creativity Action Service

CAS complements a challenging academic programme in a holistic way, providing opportunities for: self-determination, collaboration, accomplishment, and enjoyment. Creativity encourages students to engage in the arts and creative thinking. Action seeks to develop a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. Service with the community offers students a chance to understand their capacity to make a meaningful contribution.

CAS expectations: Students should aim to be involved in at least 2 activities per component. They should plan to be involved an average of one afternoon (3-4 hours) a week in CAS activities from grade 11 to 12. They should take part in a range of experiences, including at least one project.

CORE: Extended Essay (IB DP Candidates)

The Extended Essay is a 4,000-word research essay that the student completes based on a subject that they are interested in. The project is independent, but the student is guided by a supervisor with the required expertise and background knowledge.

Students begin their Extended Essay halfway through Grade 11, and finish it by the end of the first Semester in Grade 12. The Essay is sent to the IB and graded by external examiners.

CORE: Senior Project (ISL Diploma and Courses Candidates)

The ISL Senior Project is an in-depth study on a topic of the student's choosing. Its purpose is to promote academic research, writing, and/or presentation skills. This is accomplished through an independent research project on a topic of their own choice, under the guidance of a supervisor. In consultation with the advisor, the student will develop a product that is formally presented. This may be an essay, vlogs, presentation, or other modes appropriate to the task. The purpose is that the student's ideas are communicated logically and effectively.

Student begin their Senior Project halfway through Grade 11, and finish it by the end of the first Semester in Grade 12. The project is graded collaboratively by the advisor and the DP Coordinator on a pass/fail basis.