



THE INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL OF  
KUALA LUMPUR

# GUIDE TO THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME AT ISKL

for prospective students  
and parents

<b>An IB Education at ISKL</b>	<b>3</b>
Benefits of an IB Education	3
Overview of the IB Diploma Programme	4
Individual IB Diploma Courses	4
<b>IB Diploma Programme</b>	<b>5</b>
IB Diploma Subjects at ISKL	6
DP Core	7
Theory of knowledge (TOK)	7
The extended essay (EE)	7
Creativity, activity, service (CAS)	8
<b>Choosing Your Pathway</b>	<b>9</b>
Guidance at ISKL for Current Grade 10 Students	9
Making Good Choices	9
Selection of Additional Classes	10
Changes to your Course of Study	10
Changes Made Before the start of Grade 11 or During the 'Course Change' Period	10
Changes Made After Course Change Period	10
<b>Assessment &amp; Reporting</b>	<b>11</b>
IB Subject Assessment	11
IB Assessment of the Core	11
Requirements to Earn the IB Diploma	12
Assessment for ISKL Reporting	12
<b>Additional Information</b>	<b>13</b>

# An IB Education at ISKL

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) has been serving learners and their families in communities worldwide since 1968. The IBO's mission is to create a better world through high-quality education for all learners.

Today, there are more than 4,200 IB World schools around the globe serving more than 1.25 million learners and their families in four academic programs, including the IB Diploma, which is now taken each year by over 160,000 students from nearly 140 countries.

The International School of Kuala Lumpur (ISKL) is a proud IB World School partnering with the IBO to offer students the opportunity to learn in the IB Diploma Programme since 1989. Since then, more than 2,000 ISKL High School graduates have also received an IB Diploma, demonstrating their commitment to both ISKL's Mission, Vision, and Values and the IBO's Mission.

All Grade 11 and 12 students at ISKL are invited to participate in the IB Diploma Programme. We offer the IBDP on a non-selective basis and support every student in maximizing their potential.

## Benefits of an IB Education

Backed by [research](#) studying educational outcomes, we know that IB students develop strong academic, social, and emotional characteristics. They are also likely to perform well academically, often better than students on other externally credentialed curricula. ("Benefits of IB for students")

From the IBO, IB learners are:

- Encouraged to think critically and solve complex problems.
- Drive their own learning.
- A core part in educational programs that can lead them to some of the highest-ranking universities around the world.
- More culturally aware through the development of a second language.
- Able to engage with people in an increasingly globalized, rapidly changing world.

The IBO's mission is embodied in the [Learner Profile](#), which seeks to develop learners who are:

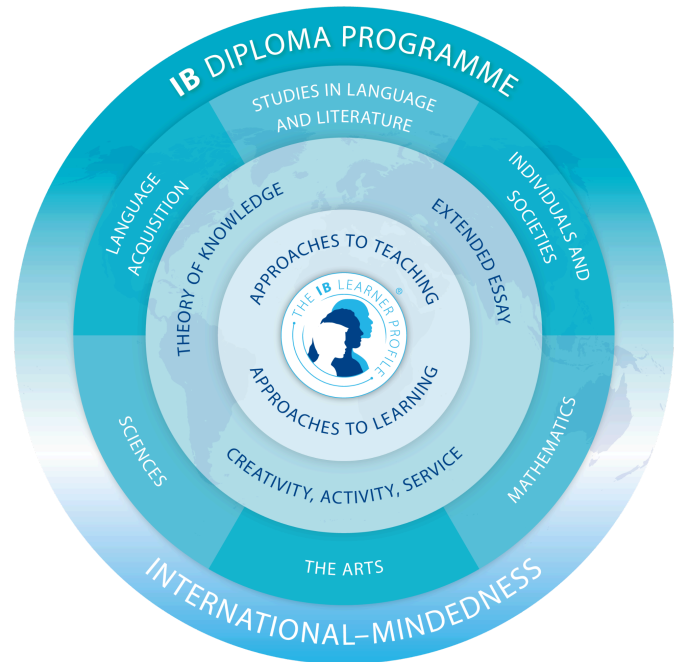
- Inquirers
- Knowledgeable
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-minded
- Caring
- Risk-takers
- Balanced
- Reflective.

("Learner profile for IB students")

# Overview of the IB Diploma Programme

Established in 1968, the first of the IB Programmes, the Diploma Programme (DP) provides a holistic, externally assessed, well-respected pathway to higher education for 16+ learners.

The DP is a challenging, two-year curriculum (Grades 11 and 12) recognized for its rigorous academic standards and emphasis on holistic learning. The curriculum develops critical thinking, research, communication, self-management, and social skills, preparing students for success in higher education and beyond.



## DP Structure

- **Core Components:**  
Theory of knowledge (TOK)  
Creativity, activity, service (CAS),  
Extended essay (EE).
- **Academic Subjects:**  
Six subjects chosen from six groups, with three at Higher Level (HL) and three at Standard Level (SL).

## DP assessment & grading

- In addition to internal assessment, the DP is assessed externally by IB examiners. In most subjects, summative examinations take place in May of Grade 12, covering the material learned during Grades 11 and 12.
- Each subject is graded on a 1-7 scale, with up to 3 additional points available for the DP core components, making the maximum score 45.
- A minimum of 24 points is required to earn the IB Diploma. (12 points from Higher Level and nine from Standard Level subjects).

## Individual IB Diploma Courses

IB Diploma Courses is the designation for students who do not wish to undertake the full DP and prefer to choose an individual learning program among the six subjects (up to six courses total). They will complete the courses and submit for assessment to the IBO, receiving certificates for the individual courses completed. At ISKL, students enrolled in the Pursuits Program will create their program using IB Diploma Courses in addition to other ISKL HS courses.

# IB Diploma Programme

To obtain the Diploma, students must select one subject from each of the six groups, three at Higher Level (HL) and three at Standard Level (SL).

## Subject groups

Group 1	Studies in Language & Literature
Group 2	Language Acquisition
Group 3	Individuals & Societies
Group 4	Sciences
Group 5	Mathematics
Group 6	The Arts

## To earn the Diploma, students must take:

- At least two language courses, one of which must be from Studies in Language & Literature (Groups 1 and 2)
- At least one Individuals & Societies course (Group 3)
- At least one Sciences course (Group 4)
- One mathematics course (Group 5)
- The IB enables students to specialize by allowing them to choose a second subject from Group 2, 3, or 4 instead of an Arts subject in Group 6, i.e. any subject group except Mathematics.

Students who opt to study two courses from the Language & Literature group may earn a bilingual Diploma.

HL subjects are studied at greater breadth and depth than SL and are therefore timetabled for more hours. The choice of HL subjects allows students to pursue areas of personal interest, play to their strengths, and meet specialist requirements for university entrance.

## IB Diploma Subjects at ISKL

At ISKL, each year, we typically offer the subjects shown below. To run, classes are subject to the minimum number of students.

The latest information on subjects taught in a specific school year can be found in ISKL's [High School Program Guide](#).

### GROUP 1: STUDIES IN LANGUAGE & LITERATURE (Language A)

#### [Language A: Literature](#)

- English Literature (HL & SL)

#### [Language A: Language & Literature](#)

- English Language & Literature (HL & SL)
- Chinese Language & Literature (HL & SL)
- Korean Language & Literature (HL & SL)
- Spanish Language & Literature (HL & SL)
- School Supported Self-Taught Language A: Literature SL - various languages.

### GROUP 2: LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (Language B)

#### [Language B](#)

[Language ab Initio](#) (for students with little or no academic experience in the language)

- Chinese (Mandarin) (HL, SL, ab initio)
- French ((HL, SL, ab initio)
- Spanish (HL, SL, ab initio)

### GROUP 3: INDIVIDUALS & SOCIETIES

[Business Management](#) HL & SL

[Economics](#) HL & SL

[Environmental Systems & Societies](#) HL & SL\*

[History](#) HL & SL

[Psychology](#) HL & SL

### GROUP 4: SCIENCES

[Biology](#) HL & SL

[Chemistry](#) HL & SL

[Computer Science](#) HL & SL

[Environmental Systems & Societies](#) HL & SL\*  
[Physics](#) HL & SL

### GROUP 5: MATHEMATICS

[Mathematics: analysis and approaches](#) HL & SL  
[Mathematics: applications and interpretation](#) HL & SL

### GROUP 6: THE ARTS

[Film](#) HL & SL  
[Theatre](#) HL & SL  
[Visual Arts](#) HL & SL

\*Environmental Systems & Societies is an interdisciplinary course that can be taken to fulfill the requirement of selecting a subject from either Group 3 or Group 4; or it may be used to fulfill both subject requirements.

Further information and IBO subject briefs for each IB Diploma course are available [here](#).

## DP Core

In addition to selecting six subjects, Diploma students must also undertake the DP core, which comprises three components designed to broaden students' educational experience and challenge them to apply their knowledge and skills.

The DP core is taught to all Diploma candidates in Theory of Knowledge and Core Curriculum classes.

### Theory of knowledge (TOK)

- Students reflect on the nature of knowledge and how we know what we claim to know.
- The TOK class meets for a total of 100 hours throughout the student's Diploma studies.
- TOK begins at the start of Grade 11 and ends after submitting the TOK Essay in Grade 12.
- Students work with their TOK teacher to learn the essentials and to produce the two pieces of work that are used to give a final IB assessment grade in this core element:
  - Grade 11 Exhibition.
  - Grade 12 Essay submitted before the mid-Semester 2 break in March.

### The extended essay (EE)

- An independent, self-directed piece of research, culminating with a 4,000-word paper.
- Students learn the fundamental research and self-management skills for a successful project in DP Core classes.
- Students are assigned an EE supervisor who will spend a maximum of five hours supporting them over the course of their essay's development.

### Creativity, activity, service (CAS)

- Students undertake and engage in activities related to each of the three strands over an 18-month period.
- Students learn the fundamentals of building their individual CAS program during DP Core classes.
- They are assigned a CAS Advisor, an IB teacher whose role is to provide support and monitor their progress throughout the program.
- The CAS Advisor interacts with the student at designated times and is available to answer questions throughout the program.

All students studying for the IB Diploma are scheduled for a Core Curriculum class. The class, which is not assessed or reported on, focuses on teaching students the five key Approaches to Learning fundamental to success in the program:

1. Thinking Skills
2. Communication Skills
3. Self-Management Skills
4. Social Skills
5. Research Skills.

While these skills are primarily taught in the subject classes, transferable links are drawn to them in the Core class. These skills are brought together in the Core class when the fundamentals of building a successful Creativity, activity, service program are developed and to support students in their journey through the extended essay.

# Choosing Your Pathway

ISKL offers flexible pathways, with the DP and individual IB courses accessible to all students. Course selection should reflect students' interests, strengths, and higher education goals, guided by ISKL counselors and teachers through an informed decision-making process.

## Guidance at ISKL for Current Grade 10 Students

The choice of IB Diploma courses at ISKL is guided by multiple stakeholders, including teachers and counselors at key points throughout the decision-making process.

### Semester 1

- Students introduced to Grade 11-12 academic pathways.
- Students attend ISKL's on-campus IB Fair to speak with current IB students and teachers.
- Students identify their preliminary pathway and subject choices.

### Semester 2

- Students and Parents are invited to attend an Information session.
- Students and Parents meet with a Counselor to discuss their choices, the implications for their learning, and higher education aspirations.
- Students finalize their subject choices mid-semester.

## Making Good Choices

The DP offers the flexibility to build a program of study that aligns with both interests and abilities. Determination of what courses to take at Higher versus Standard Level will come from the student's interest in the course as well as, in some cases, the requirements for applying to higher education institutions. As students are choosing their program, they are encouraged to reflect on themselves as learners and to use the feedback from their Grade 10 teachers as a guide.

When students undertake the DP, they do so with an understanding of its significance. It is a very challenging course of study that requires independent learning and good time management skills. In addition to the six subjects, the Core presents a great deal of intellectual rigor and high expectations for independent study. This should be taken into account when determining the overall program and subjects desired.

It is also a program that, because it is externally assessed, requires students to meet deadlines and be prepared to sit for examinations. The implications of this should be thoughtfully considered when choosing the DP.

## **Selection of Additional Classes**

ISKL believes in nurturing the well-being of all our students. With this in mind, students who choose to take the DP are only permitted to take additional ISKL classes in the following departments (where those classes can support their CAS program and non-academic aspirations):

- Physical Education & Health
- Creative Technologies (except IB or AP courses)
- The Arts (except for IB Courses)

ISKL's commitment to well-being and our firm belief, supported by the IBO that the DP is sufficiently challenging, means that we cannot support families who wish to add additional challenges to their child's workload, such as AP or other exam courses. As a result, DP students are not able to sit for AP exams for non-ISKL courses on our campus.

## **Changes to your Course of Study**

A great deal of effort is put into ensuring our students are presented with ample information during the course of Grade 10 to help them make course selections that align with their interests and passions, as well as any requirements for higher education institutions.

However, it can happen that a student's desired course of study may change. At all points in the program, the faculty, counselors, and administration at ISKL place the learner and the value of learning at the heart of any decision to change. It may be, however, that the student's desire for change is incompatible with the timetable or successful learning outcomes. In these circumstances, a change may not be possible.

## **Changes Made Before the Start of Grade 11 or During the 'Course Change' Period**

- If a student decides before the start of Grade 11 or during the Course Change Period (first three lessons of the course) that the course they've chosen no longer fits their interests and wishes to change their course of study, they must contact their counselor to make this request.
- The counselor will make the requested changes provided there is room in the new course and that it can work with the student's overall schedule.

## **Changes Made After Course Change Period**

- Our course selection process is rigorous and involves multiple stakeholders who provide guidance on the curricular elements of our courses and the suitability of courses for higher education aspirations.
- As a result, course changes made after the Course Change Period (first three lessons of the course) will be a rarity.

# Assessment & Reporting

All IB courses use a combination of Internal & External Assessments.

## Internal Assessments (IA)

- Internal Assessments comprise a piece of work completed in school that is marked by the IB class teacher and submitted to the IBO for moderation (checking the accuracy of the marking) before confirmation.

## External Assessments

- External assessments are primarily examinations held at the end of the program, but in some cases is work prepared in school under the supervision of the teacher.
- In all cases, External Assessments are submitted to the IBO for assessment by its examiners.
- At the end of Grade 11 and in the second semester of Grade 12, students sit for mock examinations to help prepare them for the final external assessments.
- External Assessment takes place in Grade 12 in May.

For a greater understanding of Assessment and Exams from the IBO, please [click here](#).

## IB Subject Assessment

- IB subjects are assessed - depending on the subject - using assessment criteria that are rubrics or mark schemes.
- The results of each assessment's marks are then converted into a grade on a 1-7 scale. These are weighted according to the value ascribed to each component, and the final grade is determined.
- Each subject's grades have a unique set of [Grade Descriptors](#) that describe the best-fit performance of the student at the end of the course.

## IB Assessment of the Core

Completion of the IB Core is a requirement for the IB Diploma. This includes completion of:

- Creativity, action, service  
Program of continuous experiences and reflections over an 18-month period.
- Theory of knowledge  
Completing the assessed elements of the course with a grade of D or better.
- Extended essay  
Submitting an Extended essay assessed by an external examiner at a grade of D or better.

In addition to completing the DP Core, a student may earn up to three points for successfully demonstrating learning in the core elements of TOK and the EE. The core matrix below demonstrates how a student may achieve these marks.

		Theory of knowledge (TOK)				
Extended essay	Grade awarded	A	B	C	D	E or N
	A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition
	B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition
	C	2	2	1	0	
	D	2	1	0	0	
	E or N	Failing condition				

Figure 8: Award of points for TOK and the EE

Source: *Diploma Assessment Procedures 2025*

### Requirements to Earn the IB Diploma

- A total of 24 points have been awarded
- Minimum of 12 points from the 3 Higher Level subjects
- Minimum of 9 points from the 3 Standard Level subjects
- No grade of 1 has been awarded
- Grade of D or better on both the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge
- Successful completion of the CAS Program

Students access their results via the IBO online portal in early July each year. (“Diploma Assessment Procedures 2025”)

### Assessment for ISKL Reporting

- As students progress through the IB Diploma or take individual IB courses, they are also learning toward an ISKL HS Diploma which is equivalent to a U.S. High School Diploma.
- The requirements for earning an ISKL HS Diploma are detailed in our [HS Program Guide](#).
- Students taking the IB Diploma and individual IB courses receive regular progress and semester reports in Semester 1 and 2 of each school year.
- IB Subjects and TOK use the IB’s assessment criteria and rubrics to assess work.
- Teachers look at the cumulative evidence collected over the assessment period to determine a best-fit judgment of the student’s progress against the IB’s 1-7 grade scale using the Subject Grade Descriptors.

- These reports then provide important information to students and families regarding their progress toward the final IB result, as well as the ISKL HS Diploma. The evidence may also be used to aid students in determining higher education objectives and aspirations.

## Additional Information

### [A Guide for Parents from the IBO](#)

#### Sources:

“Benefits of IB for students.” *International Baccalaureate*, 6 June 2023,

<https://www.ibo.org/benefits/benefits-for-students/>. Accessed 10 October 2024.

“Diploma Assessment Procedures 2025.” *IB Content Assets*, International Baccalaureate

Organisation, September 2024,

[https://resources.ibo.org/dp/works/dp\\_11162-430807?lang=en&root=1.6.2.24.9](https://resources.ibo.org/dp/works/dp_11162-430807?lang=en&root=1.6.2.24.9).

Accessed 15 October 2024.

“DP core.” *International Baccalaureate*, 12 September 2023,

<https://www.ibo.org/programmes/diploma-programme/curriculum/dp-core/>. Accessed 11

October 2024.

“Learner profile for IB students.” *International Baccalaureate*, 2 September 2024,

<https://www.ibo.org/benefits/learner-profile/>. Accessed 10 October 2024.