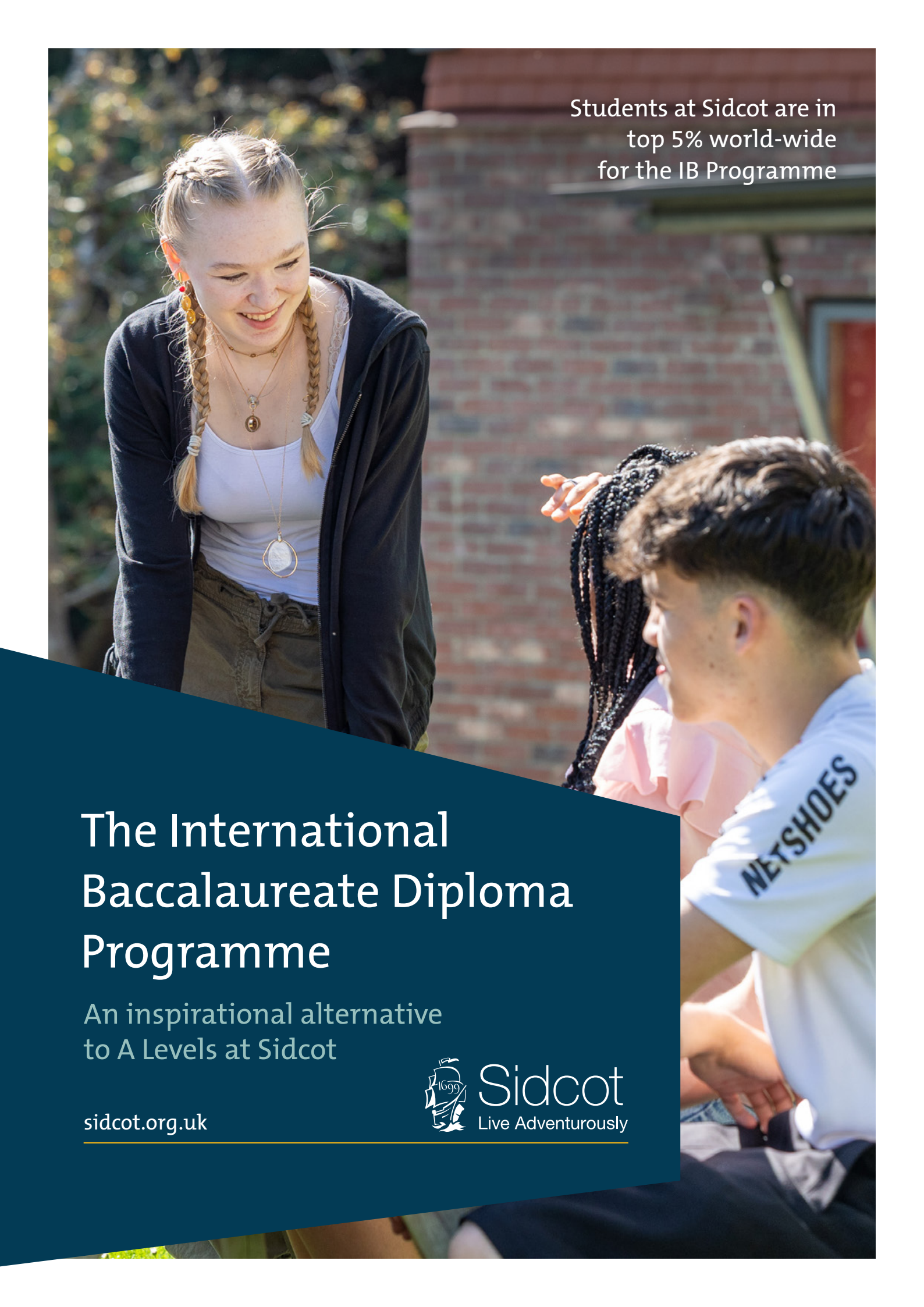




Students at Sidcot are in
top 5% world-wide
for the IB Programme

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

An inspirational alternative
to A Levels at Sidcot

sidcot.org.uk



Sidcot
Live Adventurously

What matters?

An inspirational alternative to A Levels at Sidcot

The ethos of the International Baccalaureate (IB), with its broad curriculum and emphasis on study skills, community service and internationalism fits well with our Quaker values.



of subject choices ensuring that they maintain a breadth of study across English, Mathematics, Science, Humanities, Languages and Arts. As well as academic skills, IB students are asked to demonstrate initiative, independence and organisation.

Three Core elements of the IB programme are:

1. Theory of Knowledge and
2. Creativity, Activity and Service
3. Extended Essay

Students reflect upon both their academic subjects and their personal development. They also participate in creative, physical and service activities in the local community.

The IB was originally launched in 1968 and now involves some 80,000 students studying in 125 countries. It is highly regarded internationally and recognised by all UK universities.

We have offered the IB Diploma at Sidcot for many years and our teachers are very experienced. Sidcot has regularly featured in the list of the top 20 IB UK schools (small cohort) since 2009 and is one of the only schools near Bristol to offer the Diploma.

Our results have been excellent with average points per candidate generally significantly higher than the world average scores. Our IB students go on to study at the best universities all over the world.

Students study six subjects: three at higher level and three at standard level, with the organisation

We recommend the IB Diploma as it offers:

- Breadth of subjects which keeps university options open
- Outstanding skills for university and the work place linking subject areas
- An international perspective and internationally recognised qualification
- Development of the skills of critical thinking



Please feel free to contact me for further information or advice about whether this could be right course for you.

Dirki Balaska

IB Co-ordinator & Deputy Head of Sixth Form
dirki.balaska@sidcot.org.uk

About the IB Diploma Programme

The aims include:

- The development of thinking skills and the capacity to reflect upon and evaluate actions critically.
- The education of the whole person, emphasising intellectual, personal, emotional and social growth.
- The promotion of international understanding.

The IBO Mission Statement

“The International Baccalaureate Organisation 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 IBO works with schools, governments and international organisations 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 be right.”

www.ibo.org

How is the IB Diploma different from A Levels?

The IB Diploma is different from A Levels in that it is a complete programme studied over two years in the Sixth Form with all students taking six subjects chosen from groups that represent the major domains of learning across all areas of a curriculum. This allows students to continue studying a breadth of disciplines while also studying in depth. The programme is linear and is assessed in May at the end of the two-year course with the results published in early July. In addition to the chosen six subjects students follow the core elements of the Diploma that include a course in the Theory of Knowledge, an extended essay and a programme of Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS). To be awarded the IB Diploma students must successfully complete all parts of the programme.

What is the difference between Higher and Standard Level?

Higher Level courses require a greater depth of study across a broad range of content and Standard Level courses provide a breadth of study across the whole programme. Higher Level courses normally have

5 periods each week (representing 240 hours over the two years) and Standard Level 3 periods each week (representing 150 hours). Theory of Knowledge will have up to 2 periods each week (representing 100 hours). This represents up to 26 teaching periods each week.

Does the Diploma involve coursework?

All IB Diploma courses involve an element of coursework (ranging between 20% and 50% of the final mark for the subject) and this is spread over the two years of the programme.

Benefits of studying on the IB Diploma programme

- Linguistic acquisition and development
- Cross-disciplinary and reflective learning, critical thinking
- Flexibility in the choice of a personal study programme
- Efficient planning and organisation, work self-management
- Motivation and encouragement
- Research and collaboration
- Intercultural awareness
- Transfer of skills and knowledge to real world contexts
- Creative experiences of action and service
- Contact with students around the world through the IB alumni network

What are the subject areas in the Diploma?

The IB Diploma programme involves the study of subjects chosen from each of the six groups:

- 1: Studies in Language and Literature (usually your native tongue)
- 2: Language Acquisition (another modern language)
- 3: Individuals and Society (Economics, Geography, History, Psychology)
- 4: Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics)
- 5: Mathematics
- 6: The Arts

There is a wide choice of subjects on offer and students select three to be studied at Higher Level and three at Standard Level.

The Courses

Sidcot offers the following courses, from which students must choose one subject from each group, three at Higher and three at Standard Level. However, it is possible to opt not to take a subject from the Arts, but instead take another subject from Language Acquisition to Sciences, or Individuals and Society, subject to availability. Students who are not native English speakers can opt for their own language (German and Italian) and another language, including English A, to obtain a bilingual diploma.

	SUBJECTS OFFERED [▲]	LEVEL*
1	English A Literature	SL, HL
	German A Language & Literature	SL, HL
	Italian A Literature	SL, HL
2	German B	SL, HL
	French B	SL, HL
	Spanish B	SL, HL
	Spanish ab initio	SL (Beginners)
	Italian ab initio	SL (Beginners)
3	Economics	SL, HL
	History	SL, HL
	Geography	SL, HL
	Psychology	SL, HL
4	Biology	SL, HL
	Chemistry	SL, HL
	Physics	SL, HL
5	Maths** - Applications & Interpretations	SL, HL
6	Visual Arts	SL, HL
	Music	SL, HL
	Theatre Studies	SL, HL

*SL = Standard Level, HL = Higher Level

** Maths: We offer an extra module of Vectors for those who wish to apply to German Universities.

▲ It is possible that a course might not attract sufficient interest and if this is the case then it may have to be withdrawn. We will advise students if this decision has to be taken.

How is the IB Diploma Award assessed?

Each subject examined is graded on a scale of 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest). The maximum for all six subjects is 42 points. There are up to 3 extra points for both the Theory of Knowledge (essay and presentation) and the extended essay making a total of 45 points. To obtain a Diploma, students will normally have to achieve a score of 24 points and have successfully completed all components of the programme.

How do universities regard the IB Diploma?

The IB Diploma is internationally recognised as a rigorous pre-university qualification and universities in the UK and abroad accept that the programme goes beyond the academic disciplines, with considerable candidate achievement across the subjects, together with the Theory of Knowledge, extended essay and CAS. The flexibility in choice of subjects within the Diploma programme allows students to pursue areas of personal interest and to meet any special requirements for university entrance. Those students who have studied the IB Diploma Programme are regarded as having developed the skills for independent study to a high level and are exceptionally well prepared for higher education as well as employment. Universities will usually ask for a points score for entry. (www.ucas.com)

What if I do not successfully complete all of the components of the Diploma?

Candidates who do not complete the full Diploma successfully can be awarded certificates for the subjects passed. It is possible to re-sit exams if unsuccessful.

Am I suited to the IB Diploma Programme?

The IB Diploma course does not require a student to be brilliant at all subjects but does require a high level of motivation and organisation. If you wish to continue studying a broad range of subjects and keep your options open for your university course or eventual career, then the wide ranging and rigorous IB Diploma course might be for you.

The Core

Theory of Knowledge

The Theory of Knowledge (TOK) aspect of the IB is fundamental to the way the whole Diploma course operates. TOK comes into the way each subject in every one of the six groups is taught. In addition there will be two timetabled periods per week dedicated to discussion and development of ideas. The main theme of TOK is a questioning approach. Knowledge and “known facts” are considered – are they true, and can we be sure that they are true? Contemporary, moral and ethical issues, will all be debated. Students will study the way in which a number of different subject areas approach the concept of knowledge. The areas are History, the Human Sciences, the Natural Sciences, Mathematics and Arts. Students explore ethical perspectives and issues throughout all aspects of the TOK course.



The assessment for TOK is divided in two parts. In Year 12, students prepare an exhibition on three objects related to a chosen knowledge prompt, that is then displayed in the Art Centre for the benefit of the School community. In Year 13, they will have to complete an essay on one of the six prescribed titles released in September by the IBO.

Every year, the TOK department runs a successful trip to Oxford, where students have a TOK lesson focusing on the exhibition at Pitt Rivers Museum and a tour of the Bodleian Library.

All CAS students are expected to maintain and complete a CAS portfolio, a collection of evidence that showcases experiences of the seven CAS learning outcomes and for student reflections. It is not formally assessed.

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

The IB Programme was designed to meet the needs of a well-rounded student. The Creative, Active and Service (CAS) requirements encourage IB students to excel in non-academic pursuits.

The CAS programme is coordinated by Thomas Weidner who supports IB students in choosing and planning their activities and monitors their progress. The programme formally begins at the start of the Diploma and continues regularly, for at least 18 months, with a balance between creativity, activity and service.

Students engage in CAS experiences involving one or more of the three CAS strands. A CAS experience can be a single event or may be an extended series of events. In addition, students undertake a CAS project of at least one month's duration that challenges students to show initiative, demonstrate perseverance, and develop skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and decision-making.

Popular CAS experiences and projects at Sidcot are: trying out a new sport offered in PASS, getting involved in Sidcot Saturdays with its wide range of sport, art and cultural activities, joining the ECO Changemaker's team, volunteering in the Junior School, getting involved in drama productions, or helping to organise school events such as the Festival of Peace. Many students also start a new instrument or learn new language as part of their CAS, or volunteer as subject mentors to younger students

In summary, we hope that IB students at Sidcot School will be active people. They must learn to balance a demanding academic programme with a busy social life and become respected for their energy and enthusiasm.



Extended Essay

The extended essay is a compulsory, externally assessed piece of independent research into a topic chosen by the student and presented as a formal piece of academic writing. It is intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity while engaging students in personal research. This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing of up to 4,000 words in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned, coherent and appropriate manner.

Students are guided through the process of research and writing by a supervisor (a teacher in the school). All students undertake three mandatory reflection sessions with their supervisor, including a short interview, or viva voce, following the completion of the extended essay.

Extended essay topics may be chosen from a list of approved DP subjects - normally one of the student's six chosen subjects for the IB. Students are introduced to the extended essay in the first year of their Diploma Programme and receive training on researching skills. The extended essay gives the opportunity to students to engage with topics they are passionate about and to develop research skills that will be useful in their future academic career.

In the past years, students at Sidcot School have written their extended essay in a variety of subjects and languages. Here are some examples:

1. La France doit-elle adopter l'écriture inclusive pour soutenir la montée de l'égalitarisme des sexes ? (French)
2. To what extent was Harvey Milk's election to the of San Francisco Board of Supervisors in 1977 his greatest accomplishment? (History)
3. How do the tariffs imposed on white goods by Trump affect the employment and volume of the production in the US? (Economics)
4. To what extent is positivity a necessary element in determining the effectiveness of intergroup contact at reducing prejudice? (Psychology)
5. Fino a che punto Alda Merini si discosta dai canoni della letteratura amorosa italiana? (Italian)
6. ¿Si la novela 'Como Agua para Chocolate' de Laura Esquivel hubiera sido establecida en un contexto socio-histórico diferente, importaría todavía el tema de la emancipación de la mujer? (Spanish)
7. Die Verarbeitung typischer Themen der Adoleszenz in der phantastischen Kinder-und Jugendliteratur der Gegenwart am Beispiel des Romans Rubinrot von Kerstin Gier. (German)
8. How has nature influenced the architecture of Santiago Calatrava? (Visual arts)

10 Reasons

why the IB Diploma Programme (DP) is ideal preparation for university



It increases academic opportunity

IB students care about more than just results



It encourages you to become a confident and independent learner

It's an international qualification



Graduates are globally minded

The IB encourages critical thinking



DP students have proven time management skills

It assesses more than examination techniques



Subjects are not taught in isolation

It encourages breadth and depth of learning



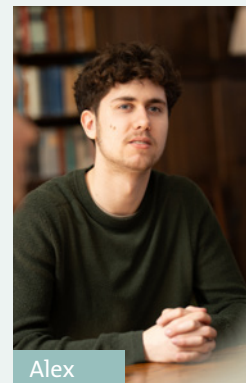
Testimonials

Sidcot students achieved an average point score of 33 on the IB Programme in 2025. This maintains the School's place above the world average and puts Sidcot students in an extremely strong position to accept places at top universities.

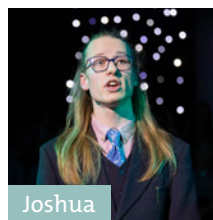
In 2025, Alex scored a world class 43 points from a possible 45.

Reflecting on his success, Alex said:

"After a wonderful time at Sidcot, I'm delighted to have reached my offer to study PPE at the University of Warwick. Studying the IB has been challenging but I'm incredibly grateful to all my teachers for their hard work and support, which I certainly couldn't have gone without; it has made me a better student and person in the process. I'm incredibly excited about this next step and will look back on my time at Sidcot with very fond memories."



Alex



Joshua

In 2025, Head student Joshua achieved 40 out of 45.

Joshua said: "While the last two years of IB have certainly not been the easiest, I am still really glad I chose the course. I was able to continue studying drama and a language, alongside everything I needed to get into university, which has made the many stressful coursework deadlines a little more worth it! I was incredibly pleased to have received 40 IB points, more than enough to get into my first-place choice of Medicine at Bristol; a course I feel my time at Sidcot, and especially the last two years, has set me up well for. Thank you to all the teachers and classmates who helped me get here."



Rosalie

In 2024, international student Rosalie achieved 38 out of 45.

Rosalie said: "I value everything I have learned in the IB, which, at times, was very challenging. I enjoyed taking various subjects and getting to know many more things about the world. The IB has equipped me with better skills for university, such as time management and essay writing. Overall, I am thankful for the experience of the IB, all the things I learned and the people I met."



Fiona

In 2022 Fiona, from Burnham-on-Sea, scored an outstanding 41 out of 45.

Fiona said: "Growing up with a German mother I have always been internationally-minded and wanted to give myself the option of studying at university in Germany. The IB course offered at Sidcot was an obvious choice for me, as it is a broad and engaging programme that is internationally recognised. Sidcot has helped me massively in working towards my goals and I am absolutely delighted with my results!"



Chiara

In 2021 Chiara achieved a world class score of 44 points from a possible 45.

Reflecting on her success, Chiara said: "I'd like to say thank you to all my teachers who supported me through my IB journey and gave me the confidence to push myself to achieve the best I could. I honestly don't know what I would have done without them. I have learnt and grown so much through my IB experience and I can honestly say that it is a time I will never forget. I think everybody can benefit from taking the IB, it teaches you independence, the ability to manage your studies and social life effectively and also enables you to become more internationally minded. It is definitely an opportunity not to be missed!"

The benefits of studying at Sidcot



To find such an exciting academic programme in the UK's most beautiful rural locations in the South West of England, amongst the Mendip Hills, is certainly of interest to many International students.

In addition to the study programme, there is so much more to enjoy about life in the Sixth Form with valuable learning experiences, both inside and outside the classroom. There are excellent facilities for arts, sport, crafts and environmental studies, as well as extensive careers advice and leadership opportunities.

With over 100 extra-curricular activities on offer, students have plenty of opportunities to try new things, as well as developing existing interests.

Sidcot Sixth Form offers a dynamic, rewarding and enjoyable experience which affords students more independence and the opportunities to develop life-long friendships alongside the skills and personal strengths required for life beyond the School.

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Travel Information:

Nearest Airport: Bristol International (15 minute drive, 13 km)
Flights to worldwide destinations.

Easy access to London International Airports and mainline rail services (approx. 2 hours to London Paddington and London Heathrow).

We provide a drop-off and pick-up service to and from Heathrow Airport at the beginning and end of each term and the October half-term.



L to R (clockwise): The annual Bristol International Balloon Fiesta pictured over the famous Clifton Suspension Bridge, the Roman Baths in the World Heritage City of Bath, Cheddar Gorge and Wells Cathedral.



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