

# Bellerose Composite High School



**A world of  
possibilities.**

**IB Guidebook  
2024-2025**



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# Welcome To Bellerose



## Message from Head of School

Welcome to Bellerose and to our International Baccalaureate (IB) Programme! Students in International Baccalaureate World Schools are given unique, challenging and diverse educational opportunities. The IB programme has a mission to empower young people with the values, knowledge, and skills to create a better and more peaceful world. This mission fits perfectly with the culture at Bellerose! As a school, Bellerose has always created opportunities for our students to become active, compassionate, lifelong learners who contribute positively to their community. As such, the IB programme at Bellerose is a wonderful choice to enrich your learning as you prepare for post-secondary studies, as well as

enable you to make sense of the complexities of the world around you.

At Bellerose, we strive to attract and develop learners that reflect the IB learner profile - students who are inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk takers, balanced, and reflective. At the end of your experience at Bellerose, we want you to have developed the skills and confidence you need to thrive and make a lasting difference in an increasingly globalized and rapidly changing world.

Once again, welcome to Bellerose and to the IB programme!

Dawn Rothwell



## Message from the IB Coordinator

Welcome future Bulldogs and IB Students! Welcome to this guidebook, that I hope will introduce you to the educational philosophy of IB programmes of education, to Bellerose, and to the community of people who will make your high school experience all that you hope it to be. Bellerose is a wonderful school that values and celebrates fun, learning, community, and action-oriented service. As of September 2023, Bellerose Composite High School is proud to be one of 3,686 schools offering the IB Diploma Programme, in 155 different countries worldwide.

Our graduating students use their knowledge and experiences to go on to study at some of the world's and country's best universities and colleges, completing bachelor's, master's, and doctoral programs, leading to careers as teachers, scientists, and artists. I encourage you to sign up for the Diploma Programme at Bellerose today, and, as diploma programme coordinator, pledge to serve and advise you throughout your time in the programme to personalize your experience and make it the best possible educational experience for you. If you have any questions about the programme or your place in it, I invite you to get in touch with me at any time or visit our school's website for more information.

Sincerely,  
Clayton Wowk



## International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Information

Imagine a worldwide community of schools, educators, and students with a shared mission to empower young people with the values, knowledge, and skills to create a better and more peaceful world. This vision is the International Baccalaureate (IB). IB programmes aim to provide an education that enables students to make sense of the complexities of the world around them. They provide an education that crosses disciplinary, cultural, national, and geographical boundaries and that champions critical engagement, stimulating ideas, and meaningful relationships.

### IB Mission Statement

The IB 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, 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.

### IB Learner Profile

The IB learner profile is central to all things IB. In many ways, the learner profile is the IB's mission statement in action. The IB learner profile consists of 10 attributes, listed below, that, together, embody the holistic nature of an IB education. At Bellerose, we strive to attract and develop learners that reflect the learner profile:

- Inquirers
- Knowledgeable
- Thinkers
- Communicators
- Principled
- Open-Minded
- Caring
- Risk-Takers
- Balanced
- Reflective



Through the development of these learner profile attributes, an IB education seeks to empower young people for a lifetime of learning, both independently and in collaboration with others.

## The Diploma Programme Model

The Diploma Programme (DP) is a curriculum framework designed by the IB that provides a challenging, internationally focused, broad, and balanced educational experience for students aged 16 to 19. Students must study six subjects and a curriculum core concurrently over two years to obtain an IB diploma. To receive the full IB diploma, students must take three **Higher Level (HL)** and three **Standard Level (SL)** courses from across at least five subject areas and complete the **DP core** requirements. IB students who graduate with an IB diploma can study at universities all around the world, often with advanced credit.

The IB learner profile and the DP core are positioned in the center of the curriculum framework (fig 1), reflecting the priority given to developing competent and active citizens and subject specialists. The core requirements of theory of knowledge (TOK), the extended essay, and creativity, activity, service (CAS) broaden the educational experience and challenge students to apply their knowledge and understanding in real-life contexts.

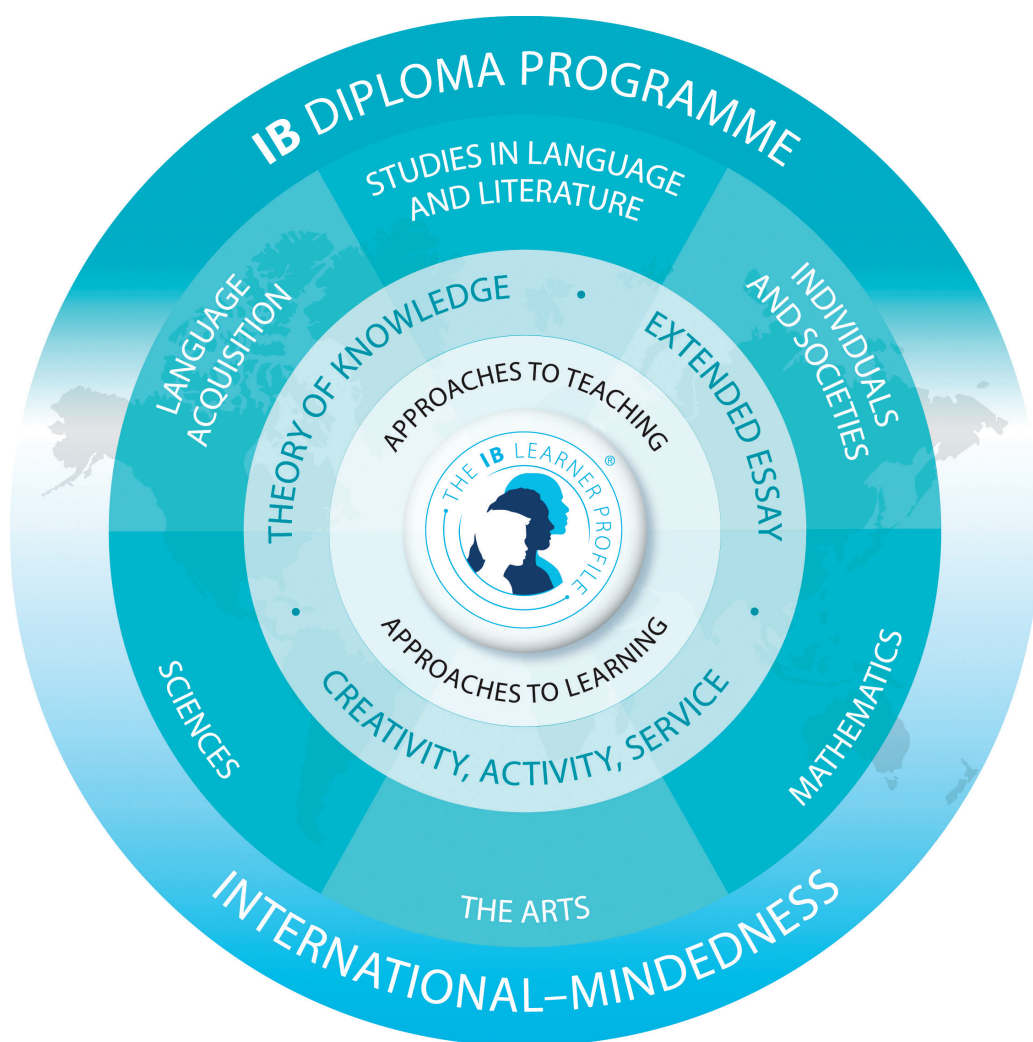


Fig 1. The Diploma Programme model



## Approaches to Teaching and Learning

Grounded in contemporary educational research, the IB's six approaches to teaching (ATTs) and five approaches to learning (ATLs) guide and focus the work that happens in IB classrooms at Bellerose.

In all IB programme courses, **teaching** is:

- **based on inquiry:** A strong emphasis is placed on students finding their own information and constructing their own understandings.
- **focused on conceptual understanding:** Concepts are explored to deepen disciplinary understandings and help students make connections and transfer learning to new contexts.
- **developed in local and global contexts:** Teaching uses real-life contexts and examples, and students are encouraged to process new information by connecting it to their own experiences and the world around them.
- **focused on effective teamwork and collaboration:** This includes promoting teamwork and collaboration between students, but it also refers to the collaborative relationship between teachers and students.
- **designed to remove barriers to learning:** Teaching is inclusive and values diversity. It affirms students' identities and aims to create learning opportunities that enable every student to develop and pursue appropriate personal goals.
- **informed by assessment:** Assessment plays a crucial role in supporting and measuring learning. This approach also recognizes the crucial role of providing students with effective feedback.

In all IB programme courses, **learning** is about developing:

- **thinking skills**—including areas such as critical thinking, creative thinking and ethical thinking
- **research skills**—including skills such as comparing, contrasting, validating and prioritizing information
- **communication skills**—including skills such as written and oral communication, effective listening, and formulating arguments
- **social skills**—including areas such as forming and maintaining positive relationships, listening skills, and conflict resolution
- **self-management skills**—including both organizational skills, such as managing time and tasks, and affective skills, such as managing state of mind and motivation.



## Subject Groupings and the Diploma Programme Core

IB students pursuing a full IB diploma study six subjects selected from the following subject groups, plus each of the core elements:

- **Studies on language and literature**
- **Language Acquisition**
- **Individuals and Societies**
- **Sciences**
- **Mathematics**
- **The Arts**

**Diploma candidates** will take some subjects at Higher Level (HL) and some at Standard Level (SL). **HL** and **SL** courses differ in scope, with students expected to demonstrate a greater body of knowledge, understanding, and skills at HL. Each student pursuing an IB diploma must take three subjects at HL and the remaining at SL. SL subjects take up 150 teaching hours. HL courses comprise up to 240 teaching hours. Instead of a course in the arts, diploma candidates may opt to study an additional course from another subject group.

The three elements of the **DP core** - theory of knowledge (TOK), creativity, activity, service (CAS) and the extended essay - are an integral part of the DP experience.

- The **theory of knowledge (TOK)** course examines the nature of knowledge and how we know what we claim to know.
- The **extended essay (EE)**, a substantial piece of academic writing of up to 4,000 words, enables students to investigate a topic of special interest that they have chosen themselves.
- The **creativity, activity, and service (CAS)** programme involves students in a range of activities and celebrates personal growth that takes place alongside their academic studies.

A student can take IB courses without pursuing the full diploma – these students are referred to as **course candidates**. Each course they take – they can take as many or as few as they wish – emphasizes the ATL's and represents the drive for holistic, conceptual understanding, and global thinking for which the DP is known. Course candidates may also complete core elements such as the extended essay or TOK course.



## International Mindedness in the Diploma Programme

All IB programmes aim to develop internationally minded people who recognize their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet. IB defines international-mindedness as **an openness to and curiosity about the world and different cultures**. An IB education fosters international-mindedness by helping students reflect on their perspective, culture and identities, and those of others. By engaging with diverse beliefs, values, and experiences, and by learning to think and collaborate across cultures and disciplines, IB learners gain the understanding necessary to make progress towards a more peaceful world.

## Assessment in the Diploma Programme

An important distinction is to be made between formal summative IB assessments and the supporting processes we develop for our IB students at Bellerose. In the DP, **assessment is intended to support curricular goals and encourage student learning**. In each class, teachers employ various assessment methods to inform and report their learning. In a separate process, at the end of a student's DP coursework, in grade 12, the IB uses both internally and externally assessed components to determine student performance.

Most of these tasks are **externally assessed**, including examinations or work completed during the course, and then sent to an external examiner. Some assessments are **internally assessed**, requiring the teacher to mark the work to the accepted IB standard. Their standard is then confirmed or moderated by an external moderator. After completing these assessment tasks and submitting them to IB, students receive grades ranging from 7 to 1, with 7 being the highest. Students receive a 7-point grade for each DP course attempted.





## Bellerose Composite High School and the Diploma Programme

As one of 5,000 IB World Schools across the globe, Bellerose is beholden to educational standards specified by the IB. A brief explanation of site-specific nuances in how we implement the DP follows.

### Balancing International and Provincial Curricula

The IB works closely with national systems of government around the world to implement educational programmes for the benefit of students. Although there is no single national education department in Canada, the IB has agreements with several provincial governments. In Alberta, schools have to combine teaching the Alberta program of study with DP classes. At Bellerose, we take care to ensure that the integrity of the DP curriculum is maintained and that students are not disadvantaged by the nature of this arrangement. The successful implementation of our programme in this local context depends on:

- Aligning DP and provincial learning outcomes and assessments so that students receive Alberta High School credit for each DP course completed.
- Differentiating assessment strategies in each DP course; students receive a percentage grade in their Alberta High School equivalent course and are regularly informed of their DP progress.
- Encouraging students to complete physical education and CALM requirements before beginning Grade 11.
- Scheduling DP courses every second day to run simultaneously over two years.
- Having Grade 10 students complete Alberta High School courses Math 10C and Math 20-1 before entering the DP.
- Having Grade 10 students complete French 10 or Spanish 10 before entering the DP.
- Allocating more scheduled time to our HL subjects – Literature, Biology, and History and recognizing student achievement by allocating an additional 3 credits for each HL course taken using the locally developed course system.
- Offering multiple group six and group four courses, providing more than one route to an IB diploma.

### Grade 10 Students and Entry into the Diploma Programme

As conceived by IB, the DP is a curriculum framework designed by IB for students in the last two years of high school. At Bellerose, incoming Grade 10 students interested in completing a DP course or the DP diploma enroll in our **10i** program. These introductory courses follow the Alberta Program of study but are **taught by IB-trained teachers** that introduce students to the philosophy of the DP, including the Learner Profile, ATTs, ATs, and the concept of international-mindedness. Here, students meet a cohort of peers and form relationships that will sustain them over the next two years of the DP. **Students planning to pursue a full IB diploma should register in the 10i program.** Interested course candidates may choose specific courses.



## Course Offerings and Descriptions

At Bellerose, we offer one subject from each of the first five subject groups. The available courses are listed in the table below as a progression, beginning with our grade ten courses, which introduce incoming students to the philosophy of the DP and lead into their Year One (Y1) and Year Two (Y2) DP courses, taken concurrently in Grade 11 and 12, respectively. The equivalent of each course from the Alberta high school program at the Grade 12 level is included. You will find a brief description of each course on the following pages.

**Table 1. IB subject groups and course offerings, presented as a progression from Grade 10 to 12.**

Subject Group	Grade 10 Course(s)	Grade 11 Course(s)	Grade 12 Course(s)	Alberta High School Grade 11/12 Equivalent Course
1. Studies on Language and Literature	English 10-1 IB	Literature (HL) Y1	Literature HL Y2	English 20-1/30-1 + English Literature 35*
2. Language Acquisition	French 10 IB	French B (SL) Y1	French B SL Y2	French 20/30
	OR Spanish 10 IB	Spanish ab (SL) Y1	Spanish ab (SL) Y2	Spanish 20/30
3. Individuals and Societies	Social 10-1 IB	History (HL) Y1	History (HL) Y2	Social Studies 20-1/30-1 + World History 35*
4. Sciences	Science 10 IB	Biology (HL) Y1	Biology (HL) Y2	Biology 20/30 + Biology 35*
	Computer Science 10	Chemistry (SL) Y1	Chemistry (SL) Y2	Chemistry 20/30
		Computer Science (SL) Y1	Computer Science (SL) Y2	CTS 20 level/ Science 30 level
5. Mathematics	Math 10C-IB AND Math 20-1 IB	Math (SL) Y1	Math (SL) Y2	Math 30-1/Math 31
6. The Arts	Art 10	Visual Arts (SL) Y1	Visual Arts (SL) Y2	Fine Arts 20/30 level

\*These locally developed courses allow schools to schedule extra time for HL subjects. Students will receive 8 credits for completing year two Literature, Biology, and History courses. Typically, these courses are not used to apply for university admission.



## **Language A: Literature (HL)**

The English A: Literature course aims at developing an understanding of factors that contribute to the production and reception of literature—the creativity of writers and readers, the nature of their interaction with their respective contexts and with literary tradition, the ways in which language can give rise to meaning and/or effect, and the performative and transformative potential of literary creation and response. Students will consider their own interpretations as well as the critical perspectives of others, to explore how such positions are shaped by cultural belief systems and to negotiate meaning.

## **French B (SL)**

Language B is a language acquisition course designed for students with some previous experience of French. Students hone their ability to communicate through the study of language, themes and texts. Students continue to develop their knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, as well as their conceptual understanding of how language works.

## **Spanish ab initio (SL)**

Language ab initio is a language acquisition course designed for students with no previous experience in—or very little exposure to—Spanish. Students develop the ability to communicate through the study of language, themes and texts. There are five prescribed themes: identities, experiences, human ingenuity, social organization and sharing the planet

## **History (HL)**

The DP history course is a world history course based on a comparative and multi-perspective approach to history. It involves the study of a variety of types of history, including political, economic, social and cultural, and provides a balance of structure and flexibility. The course puts a premium on developing the skills of critical thinking, and on developing an understanding of multiple interpretations of history.

## **Biology (HL)**

Biology is the study of life. The vast diversity of species makes biology both an endless source of fascination and a considerable challenge. By studying biology in the DP, in addition to learning the basic principles and concepts of ecology, molecular biology, anatomy and physiology, students become aware of how scientists work and communicate with each other.

## **Chemistry (SL)**

Chemistry is an experimental science that combines academic study with the acquisition of practical and investigational skills. Chemical principles underpin both the physical environment in which we live and all biological systems. The DP chemistry course allows students to develop a wide range of practical skills and to increase facility in the use of mathematics. It also allows students to develop interpersonal and information technology skills, which are essential to life in the 21st century

## **Computer Science (SL)**

The IB DP Computer science SL course, underpinned by conceptual thinking, enables and empowers innovation, exploration, and the acquisition of further knowledge. During the course the student will develop computational solutions involving the ability to: identify a problem or unanswered question; design, prototype and test a proposed solution; liaise with clients to evaluate the success of the proposed solution; and make recommendations for future developments.



## **Mathematics: Analysis and approaches (SL)**

The IB DP Mathematics: analysis and approaches course recognizes the need for analytical expertise in a world where innovation is increasingly dependent on a deep understanding of mathematics. The focus is on developing important mathematical concepts in a comprehensible, coherent and rigorous way, achieved by a carefully balanced approach. A strong emphasis is placed on the ability to construct, communicate, and justify correct mathematical arguments.

## **Visual Arts (SL)**

Visual Arts 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. 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 the visual arts.

## **Theory of Knowledge (TOK)**

The theory of knowledge (TOK) course provides an opportunity for students to reflect on the nature, scope and limitations of knowledge and the process of knowing. In this way, the main focus of TOK is not on students acquiring new knowledge but on helping students to reflect on, and put into perspective, what they already know.

## **Extended Essay (EE)**

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.

## **Biology 35**

Students are enrolled in Biology 35, a locally developed course, in the second semester of their Grade 11 year. This arrangement gives additional credit to students completing HL Biology.

## **English Literature 35**

Students are enrolled in English Literature 35, a locally developed course, in the second semester of their Grade 11 year. This arrangement gives additional credit to students completing HL Literature.

## **World History 35**

Students are enrolled in World History 35, a locally developed course, in the first semester of their Grade 12 year. This arrangement gives additional credit to students completing HL History.



## Why IB?

IB programmes aim to do more than other curricula. The DP framework develops inquiring, knowledgeable, and caring young people who are motivated to succeed. The IB gives students distinct advantages by building their critical thinking skills, nurturing their curiosity and their ability to solve complex problems.

### Benefits to Students

IB learners **are**:

- encouraged to think critically and solve complex problems
- a driver of their own learning
- a core part in educational programmes 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.

IB learners **receive**:

- An international qualification that is recognized by colleges and universities around the world with **advanced standing**.
- **Advanced credit** towards undergraduate degrees at universities both local and abroad
- **Scholarships** and post-secondary grant opportunities
- Access to **IB alumni networks** of professionals and graduate students



## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Is the IB Diploma Programme only for “gifted” students?**

The DP is a rigorous course of study for motivated students. That said, prior academic success is less of an indicator of ability to earn the diploma than are a student's determination to do their best, to be organized, and to complete the work while leading a balanced life in and beyond the classroom.

### **Do students have to complete the full IB diploma to be in the IB programme?**

Students may choose to complete as many or as few IB courses and core elements as they wish. Specific IB courses that may be of interest to students include Visual Art and Computer Science. IB course certificates are awarded to individual course candidates on a case-by-case basis. Students choosing specific courses should pay attention to their course selection sheets. Because DP courses are scheduled year-long, on alternating days, specific pairs of courses are recommended to be taken together to ensure that students have a full timetable.

### **Can students go directly into the IB Diploma Program without doing the 10i program offered in Grade 10?**

Yes, students can enter the DP without having taken the Grade 10i courses that we offer. However, it is recommended that students take the 10i program to support the development of the skills they will need to enhance their success in the DP. Specifically, students must have completed Math 20-1 and Spanish 10 or French 10 in Grade 10 to pursue a full DP diploma, starting in Grade 11.

### **Do DP students have time for anything beyond academics?**

Absolutely. Most successful DP students live balanced lives. The CAS programme in particular recognizes and promotes achievement outside of the classroom.

### **Do DP teachers receive special training?**

All DP teachers receive IB-specific professional development in their respective course subjects and in IB approaches to teaching and learning from certified IB workshop leaders. This is a requirement for all IB World Schools.

### **How does the DP differ from other programs such as Advanced Placement?**

The DP is a two-year comprehensive course curriculum culminating in a set of externally graded final exams and an internally assessed final project. The DP is a cohesive and comprehensive programme of study, not a collection of individual exams as is the case with Advanced Placement. The DP core provides coherence between all subject groups.

## What supports are available to students participating in the DP?

Student support is accessed through the IB Coordinator. An important aspect of the IB Coordinator's role is to maintain an open dialogue with students, so that each student feels appropriately supported in their progress.

## How do IB marks compare to Alberta percentage grades?

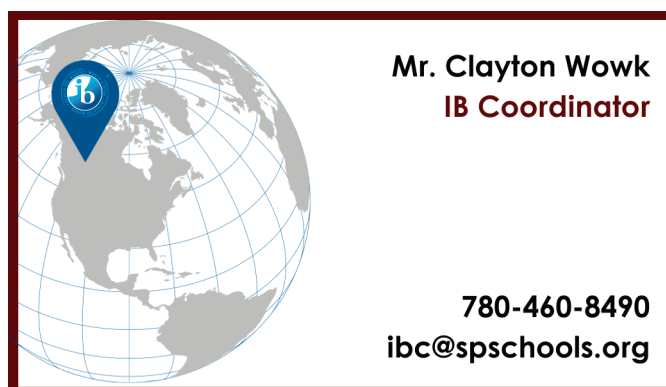
IB students are evaluated with a mark from 1-7, following IB guidelines for a particular subject. Marks from 1-7 appear on IB course certificates. However, students also receive a percentage grade for their equivalent Alberta High School course. This arrangement benefits IB students applying for university admission.

## What happens if I go into the program and find out it's not for me?

Sometimes students may decide that the DP is not a good fit for them. Students who have registered for the DP are expected to complete their Grade 11 year. At that juncture, the student can be supported in their transition to the regular academic program and register for Alberta High School courses. Special circumstances can require different arrangements.

## How can I learn more about the IB and DP?

You can visit the IB website at [ibo.org](http://ibo.org), attend IB parent information meetings and events, email our IB Coordinator at [ibc@spschools.org](mailto:ibc@spschools.org), or speak with your child's future classroom teacher. Our school's website has a specific IB page ([bchs.spschools.org/our-school/programs/international-baccalaureate-ib](http://bchs.spschools.org/our-school/programs/international-baccalaureate-ib)) that you might find informative.



This guidebook was informed by multiple publications, made available by the IB and graciously licensed for use by IB World Schools, notably:

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2015). Diploma Programme: From principles into practice.

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2019). What is an IB education?

International Baccalaureate Organization. (2021). Diploma Programme assessment procedures 2022.



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