

IB Diploma Programme

HANDBOOK

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**IV LO z Oddziałami Dwujęzycznymi im.
Stanisława Staszica w Sosnowcu**
061902 IB World School

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General Information

Introduction

This handbook is designed to support students and their parents in understanding the structure and requirements of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) at Stanisław Staszic IV General Secondary School with Bilingual Sections (IBWS 061902) and to assist them in making informed decisions about their educational pathway within the programme.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB DP) is a two-year course of study for students aged 16–19, delivered in accordance with the standards of the International Baccalaureate Organization. The programme leads to a qualification recognised by universities worldwide and enjoys an excellent reputation. The IB Diploma Programme is based on the principle that education should develop not only knowledge, but also the attitudes and skills required for responsible participation in society. In line with the IB mission, the programme aims to develop students who are inquiring, reflective, and aware of the world's diversity.

Why IB?

The programme provides students with a coherent preparation for further education by developing skills essential for academic study. Students learn to analyse information, construct arguments, and work with a variety of sources. The Diploma Programme is, by design, highly interdisciplinary, which fosters a deeper understanding of the world around us. The programme supports the development of organisation and time management skills through the completion of long-term tasks such as the Extended Essay and internal assessment components. Students learn to plan their work, manage deadlines, and take responsibility for their own learning. An important aspect of the programme is the development of communication skills, particularly in English, which is the main language of instruction. Students are prepared to work both independently and, in a team, reflect on their learning, and make informed academic decisions.

Programme Structure and the School's Subject Offer

The IB Diploma Programme consists of six subjects selected from specific subject groups. Students choose one subject from each of the first five groups. Instead of selecting a subject from Group 6, students may choose an additional subject from Groups 2–4.

Subjects are studied at two levels:

- Higher Level (HL) – involving a broader and more in-depth study of the subject,
- Standard Level (SL) – covering the core aspects of the subject.

Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature

- Polish A: Literature

Group 2: Language Acquisition

- English B (HL) – compulsory subject
- French B (SL)
- German B (SL)
- Spanish B (SL)

Group 3: Individuals and Societies

- Business Management
- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Philosophy
- Psychology
- Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS)¹

¹ Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS) is an interdisciplinary subject that fulfills the requirements of both Group 3 and Group 4.

Group 4: Sciences

- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS)

Group 5: Mathematics

- Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches
- Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation

Group 6

Students choose an additional subject from Groups 2–4.

In addition to the six subjects, all students complete the core components of the programme:

- Theory of Knowledge (TOK),
- Extended Essay (EE),
- Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS).

Student Pathway – Admissions and Progression

Entry into the IB Diploma Programme begins with admission to the so-called pre-IB class (international section). In the first stage, students are admitted based on the general admission rules for upper secondary schools in Poland and the results of an English-language test.

During the pre-IB stage (the first two years), students follow the Polish national curriculum while gradually being introduced to IB approaches to learning (ATL), including source analysis, project-based work, and learning in English.

In the second year, students select their IB subjects. Based on these choices, they enter the two-year IB Diploma Programme in the third and fourth years of study. This pathway requires informed decision-making and readiness for sustained academic effort.

Assessment Components

Final grades in the IB Diploma Programme are based on a combination of external assessment and internal assessment. External examinations are taken at school, but the examination papers are sent to IB examiners outside the school for marking. These examinations form the main component of the final grade and typically account for approximately 70–80% of the total.

Internal assessment (IA) consists of coursework completed during the programme, such as reports, investigations, or research tasks. Students complete an IA in each subject. These are assessed by the teacher and then externally moderated by the IB. Internal assessment usually contributes approximately 20–30% of the final grade. Each subject is graded on a scale from 1 to 7. Students may receive up to 3 additional points from Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay. Completion of CAS is a requirement for the award of the diploma.

Academic honesty is a fundamental principle of the IB Diploma Programme. Students are expected to produce authentic work and to acknowledge all sources appropriately.

They are required to avoid plagiarism, collusion, and other forms of academic misconduct. These principles are integral to the learning process and support the development of responsibility and reflective thinking.

University Recognition

The IB Diploma is recognised by universities worldwide. IB results are considered in the admissions process both in Poland and internationally, in accordance with the criteria set by individual institutions.

The programme prepares students for higher education by developing analytical, research, and independent learning skills.

IB Learner Profile in Practice

The IB Learner Profile (inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, reflective) underpins all aspects of teaching and learning within the programme. Its principles are reflected in everyday classroom practice, lesson structure, and assessment approach. Students are encouraged to ask questions, explore different perspectives, and develop independent thinking. Through coursework and projects, they learn to communicate effectively, collaborate with others, and reflect on their own

learning. This approach supports the development of attributes such as open-mindedness, integrity, responsibility, and resilience. The Learner Profile is not a separate element of the programme but an integral part of the student experience, shaping both academic work and personal development.

Career and Educational Counselling in the IB Programme

Career and educational counselling at our school provides space for conversation, reflection, and purposeful planning, combining ambitious goals with genuine care for each student.

1. Why This Area Is Vital in the IB Programme

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme prepares students for academic success. It also helps them make informed, reflective, and responsible decisions about their future. This includes educational pathways, personal development, and career aspirations. At our school, we perceive career counselling as key to supporting students in developing self-awareness and exercising agency. We help them make thoughtful choices about subject selection, university pathways, and their next stages of learning and life.

In practice, this involves helping students align their interests, strengths, values, and aspirations with the programme's demands and higher education requirements. We believe sound decisions come not from pressure or chance. They grow from reflection, reliable information, and good guidance in a supportive environment.

2. Our Approach to Career Counselling

At our school, career counselling is not limited to university applications alone. Instead, it is understood as a broader developmental process that includes:

- Discovering and nurturing each student's potential
- Supporting subject selection and educational pathway planning
- Assisting students in identifying possible fields of further study
- Accompanying students as they make informed, conscious, and responsible choices
- Supporting the transition from secondary education to higher education

The counsellor helps students answer more than just, "Which university?" Students explore, "Who am I as a learner and person?", "What environment helps me flourish?" and "How do

my ambitions connect with real opportunities?” This approach aligns with IB expectations for guidance, student reflection, and preparation for higher education.

3. How a Career Counsellor Can Help

Students and parents may ask the counsellor for help in many areas:

- Choosing subjects and levels (Standard or Higher)
- Checking which subjects certain university courses require
- Comparing educational systems and higher education in different countries
- Understanding entry requirements for universities and programmes
- Organising future ideas and identifying strengths, preferences, and values
- Planning the next steps of university application
- Preparing for a new educational and cultural environment
- Understanding predicted grades, transcripts, references, and procedures
- Managing uncertainty and pressure caused by big decisions

The counsellor does not make decisions for students. Instead, the counsellor helps them explore options, ask meaningful questions, interpret information, and develop realistic action plans.

4. Support in Practice

Career support at our school is ongoing. It is not just a single event. This support is part of student life in the international classes. Our activities include:

- Individual student meetings
- Parent information sessions
- Workshops on subject selection and university planning
- Reflective talks to help students clarify their goals
- Guidance toward reliable, current information on degrees and admissions
- Help prepare school documents for university applications

When necessary, the counsellor collaborates with the form tutor, subject teachers, and the IB Coordinator to ensure that students receive coherent, balanced, and well-informed support.

5. Stages of Student Support

1. Self-Discovery and Informed Choice

At the initial stage, we focus on helping students better understand their interests, strengths, motivations, and values. We support them in making informed decisions grounded in self-reflection and in developing self-awareness rather than relying solely on external pressure.

2. Academic Pathway Planning

This stage involves choosing subjects and levels that reflect the student's abilities, aspirations, and potential future directions.

s understand how decisions made within the Diploma Programme may influence access to future higher education opportunities.

3. Exploration of Possibilities

Students explore different fields of study, countries, institutions, and educational models. We support them in organising these possibilities, evaluating them critically, and distinguishing between decisions based on evidence and those influenced by stereotypes, anxiety, or limited information.

4. Transition to Higher Education

At this stage, we guide students through applications and transitions. We help them understand timelines, requirements, documents, predicted grades, transcripts, and procedures the job market.

6. The Role of Parents in the Process

We view parents as key partners in shaping student plans. Parents should not make decisions for students but should support their independence and confidence. We encourage parents to:

- Listen with curiosity, openness, and respect
- Help students organise information without added pressure
- Discuss values, aspirations, and purpose
- See decisions as growth, not a single test

7. Division of Responsibility

- The school builds a supportive environment, offers reliable guidance, and communicates clearly about options and procedures.
- The student is responsible for active engagement in the process, reflection, asking questions, exploring possibilities, and taking increasing ownership of decisions.
- The parent is responsible for creating a safe space for dialogue and cooperating with the school in a spirit of partnership and trust.

8. Quality and Integrity of the Process

We are committed to ensuring that our counselling is grounded in verified information, reflection, and ethical practice. Therefore:

- We rely on official IB guidance, university admissions information, and current entry requirements.
- We ensure effective cooperation between the counsellor, IB Coordinator, and teaching staff.
- We approach predicted grades and school documentation with honesty, professionalism, and transparency, in accordance with the principles of academic integrity.

9. Important Information for Students and Parents

We support students and families in understanding pathways, planning next steps, and interpreting requirements for different systems. Still, the school cannot guarantee admission or recognition by any course, school, or country. Requirements may change. Early planning, careful research, and checking official sources are essential.

10. What Sets Us Apart

Our school blends educational and career counselling with a focus on whole student development. We support young people in planning future steps, and in understanding:

- How they learn best by developing Approaches to Learning skills
- How they make decisions
- What matters most to them
- Where they flourish
- How to build a reflective, balanced future

Our approach pairs high expectations with student reflection, agency, and personal growth. This aligns with the broader goals of IB education. Career counselling becomes more than help with applications. It is a key part of an educational experience that shapes students into thoughtful, responsible, self-aware young adults. We urge students and parents to seek counselling support early, even before stress and pressure begin. The earlier the conversation, the more time to reflect, inform, and align decisions with the student's growing potential. Career and educational counselling at our school is focused on purposeful planning. It supports students in making educational choices with confidence, integrity, and direction. It is a place where ambitious goals meet attentiveness to people.

The Role Of The Library In An IB World School

The library and its librarians in IB World Schools fulfil both educational and pedagogical functions. Like other staff members, librarians participate in training sessions, collaborative meetings, and workshops with teachers and students. They are also responsible for organising and managing the library and continuously updating its resources to meet the needs of both staff and students.

Collecting, developing, preserving, and providing access to library collections constitute the four pillars of a librarian's work, particularly in an IB World School. The IB library supports students in developing research skills, international-mindedness, and inquiry-based learning. A diverse range of resources enables students to explore various areas of inquiry. The librarian fosters students' curiosity and encourages independent problem-solving. The development of IB students' academic skills is supported by library staff through instruction in effective information searching, evaluation, and contextual application. Librarians help students distinguish between reliable and unreliable sources of information, a skill essential for developing research competencies, including writing the Extended Essay (EE).

Librarians assist students in formulating research questions, selecting credible sources, and developing accurate academic referencing and bibliographic skills for final projects. They also provide materials that encourage exploration of the nature of knowledge and various areas of cognition. Promoting academic integrity is another crucial role of the library.

Librarians teach the principles of citation, bibliography creation, plagiarism avoidance, ethical use of intellectual property, and responsible use of AI. These requirements are fundamental not

only within IB World Schools but also across all educational institutions. The work of a librarian involves ongoing collaboration with subject teachers. The library collection reflects diverse cultures, languages, and perspectives, supporting the development of students' international-mindedness.

Furthermore, the library serves as an open and inclusive space that fosters group work, independent study, document analysis, and other educational activities for teachers, students, and, when necessary, parents. Teacher-librarians in the IB programme are both educators and collaborative partners. They are the custodians of the library, but above all, they actively participate in the educational development of IB Diploma Programme students.

Approaches to Teaching and Learning in the IB Diploma Programme

In the IB Diploma Programme, Approaches to Teaching (ATT) and Approaches to Learning (ATL) form the pedagogical framework that supports effective education. ATT focuses on how teachers facilitate learning, while ATL focuses on how students learn and develop transferable skills. Together, they promote inquiry, independence, critical thinking, and lifelong learning in alignment with the IB learner profile.

PART I — Approaches to Teaching (ATT)

1. Teaching Based on Inquiry

Inquiry-based teaching encourages students to participate actively in the learning process by asking questions, investigating problems, and constructing understanding.

Examples:

- Mathematics: How can different strategies be used to solve the same problem?
- Biology: Which hypothesis best explains the experimental results?
- History: What evidence supports different historical interpretations?
- Physics: How can an experiment be designed to test a theory?
- English: What questions does the text encourage readers to explore?

2. Teaching Focused on Conceptual Understanding

Conceptual teaching prioritises broad ideas and transferable understanding rather than the memorisation of isolated facts.

Examples:

- Chemistry: How does energy transfer explain chemical reactions?
- Mathematics: Why is the concept of a function fundamental to mathematics?
- Economics: How does interdependence shape markets?
- Geography: What is the relationship between urbanisation and sustainability?
- Literature: Why do universal themes appear across cultures?

3. Teaching Developed in Local and Global Contexts

Learning becomes more meaningful when it is connected to authentic local and global contexts.

Examples:

- Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS): How does climate change affect our region?
- Business Management: How do local businesses respond to global trends?
- Mathematics: How can statistics be used to explain social issues?
- History: How do global conflicts influence individual nations?
- Languages: How does culture shape communication?

4. Teaching Focused on Collaboration and Teamwork

Learning is a social process that is strengthened through collaboration, discussion, and constructive feedback.

Examples:

- Science: Design and conduct an investigation in groups.
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK): How do discussions influence the construction of knowledge?
- Languages: Prepare and deliver a collaborative presentation.
- Mathematics: Compare and evaluate different solution methods.
- Art: Create a collaborative artistic project.

5. Differentiated Teaching

Differentiation adapts instruction to meet the diverse needs of learners and promotes equitable access to learning opportunities.

Examples:

- Mathematics: Solve problems using either algebraic or graphical methods.
- Languages: Demonstrate understanding through oral or written responses.
- History: Analyse sources of varying levels of complexity.
- Science: Choose between an experimental or research-based task.
- Art: Express concepts using a variety of artistic media.

6. Teaching Informed by Assessment

Assessment supports learning through formative and summative feedback that guides student improvement and reflection.

Examples:

- Biology: How can your experimental design be improved?
- Mathematics: Identify and explain errors in practice assessments.
- English: Revise essays in response to teacher feedback.
- Chemistry: Evaluate the strengths and limitations of a laboratory report.
- Psychology: Reflect on your performance in a research task.

PART II — Approaches to Learning (ATL)

1. Thinking Skills

Thinking skills include critical thinking, creativity, reflection, and metacognition.

Examples:

- Mathematics: Why does this method work?
- Physics: What assumptions limit the validity of the model?
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK): How do we determine whether knowledge is reliable?
- Literature: How might interpretation change in a different context?
- Economics: What alternative solutions could be considered?

2. Communication Skills

Communication skills include speaking, writing, listening, and appropriate digital interaction.

Examples:

- English: Present a persuasive argument.
- History: Write an analytical essay.
- Science: Explain results clearly and accurately.
- Languages: Conduct a structured conversation.
- Business Management: Deliver a professional presentation

3. Social Skills

Social skills support collaboration, empathy, and intercultural understanding.

Examples:

- CAS: How does teamwork enhance community service?
- Psychology: How do social roles influence behaviour?
- Geography: How do cultural perspectives shape decision-making?
- Group Work: How can conflicts be resolved constructively?
- History: Why do societies interpret historical events differently?

4. Self-Management Skills

Self-management involves organisation, time management, motivation, resilience, and the ability to work independently.

Examples:

- Extended Essay (EE): How will you organise and manage your research timeline?
- Mathematics: Which revision strategy is most effective for you?
- Science Internal Assessment (IA): How can the project be planned and organised efficiently?
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK) Essay: How do you respond to setbacks and challenges?
- All Subjects: How do you balance multiple deadlines effectively?

5. Research Skills

Research skills include formulating research questions, evaluating sources, analysing information, and presenting findings ethically.

Examples:

- Extended Essay (EE): What research question will guide your investigation?
- History: Which sources are the most reliable and relevant?
- Biology: How should collected data be analysed and interpreted?
- Economics: What evidence best supports your argument?
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK): Why is academic honesty essential in research?

Approaches to Teaching define effective instructional practices, while Approaches to Learning develop essential student competencies. Together, they foster inquiry, collaboration, independence, reflection, and lifelong learning, supporting students in becoming thoughtful, responsible, and internationally minded learners.

Subject Groups In The IB Diploma Programme

GROUP 1 Polish A: Literature

Polish A: Literature is a compulsory subject for all students in the IB Diploma Programme (IB DP). Students choose whether to take the course at Standard Level (SL – 4 hours per week) or at Higher Level (HL – 6 hours per week).

Throughout the course, students focus exclusively on the analysis and interpretation of literary texts, employing a range of literary methodologies and critical approaches. They study works of literature produced across different historical periods and cultural contexts. In analysing these texts, students develop their own interpretations and critically engage with the perspectives of others, comparing their own hypotheses with established critical viewpoints. By exploring the nature of literature and the aesthetic functions of literary language, students reflect on the ways in which literature represents and shapes the world.

The course covers three areas of exploration:

1. **the study of interactions between readers, writers, and texts;**
2. **the relationship between texts and their contexts (time and place);**
3. **the study of intertextuality and the connections between texts.**

The teacher responsible for the course determines the reading list, ensuring that all selected works meet a number of prescribed criteria.

Students at Standard Level (SL) are required to study at least 9 literary works, of which:

- at least four must be originally written in the language of the course;
- at least three must be works translated into the language of the course.

In addition, the selected works must represent at least three literary forms, three historical periods, and three countries or regions from at least two continents.

Students at Higher Level (HL) are required to study at least 13 literary works, of which:

- at least five must be originally written in the language of the course;
- at least four must be works translated into the language of the course.

Furthermore, the selected works must represent at least four literary forms, three historical periods, and four countries or regions from at least two continents

ASSESSMENT

SL level	SL level	HL level	HL level
<u>Assessment component</u>	<u>Weighting</u>	<u>Assessment component</u>	<u>Weighting</u>
Paper 1 <u>(written examination)</u> Literary analysis and interpretation of one of two prescribed extracts	35%	Paper 1 <u>(written examination)</u> Literary analysis and interpretation of two prescribed extracts	35%

Paper 2 (written examination) Comparative essay based on two works studied during the course	35%	Paper 2 (written examination) Comparative essay based on two works studied during the course	25%
Individual Oral (oral examination) Presentation and discussion with the examiner on two works studied during the course, analysed in relation to a chosen global issue	30%	Individual Oral (oral examination) Presentation and discussion with the examiner on two works studied during the course, analysed in relation to a chosen global issue	20%
		HL Essay (written examination) An essay on one work studied during the course	20%

LANGUAGE A: LITERATURE (SSST)

Candidates for the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme who did not study Polish at earlier stages of their school education may, within Group 1 subjects, take another language in the school-supported self-taught (SSST) option at SL level instead of Polish. The subject Language A: Literature in the SSST option may be taken only if the student wishes to study a Language A that is not offered by the school. Detailed information on the Language A: Literature (SSST) course may be found in the *Language Policy (SSST)* document available on the school website.

GROUP 2 LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

ENGLISH B HL / FRENCH B SL / GERMAN B SL / SPANISH B SL

During their foreign language studies, students develop communicative competence and the ability to use language consciously within various cultural and social contexts. The Group 2 curriculum involves language learning at different proficiency levels—ranging from the ab initio level, designed for beginners, to the Language B level, aimed at students with prior language experience. Students undertake language courses at either Standard Level (SL) or Higher Level (HL). Both levels develop all linguistic competencies; however, the HL level involves a broader scope of material, more complex linguistic structures, and a deeper analysis of texts and cultural issues.

In our school, we offer Language B SL courses in three languages: French, Spanish, and German. The English course—mandatory for all students—is taught at the advanced level (English B HL). Learning focuses on communication in real-life situations, understanding the mutual influence between language and culture, and reflecting on global issues framed within five major themes:

- Identities
- Experiences
- Human Ingenuity
- Social Organization
- Sharing the Planet

The Group 2 program creates an environment conducive to developing communicative competence, autonomy, and cultural openness. Students learn to use a foreign language as a tool for communication, cooperation, and conscious participation in the modern world. In accordance with the Approaches to Learning (ATL) and Approaches to Teaching (ATT) philosophies, they develop communicative, social, and research skills through active engagement with the language, collaboration, and reflection on their own learning process.

Group 2 courses are designed to help students:

- Develop the ability to communicate effectively in a foreign language.
- Expand their range of vocabulary and grammatical structures.
- Develop the ability to understand written and spoken texts.
- Cultivate the skill of creating coherent oral and written statements.
- Develop interactive competencies through participation in discussions and conversations.
- Develop critical thinking and argumentation skills.
- Explore the culture and perspectives of countries within a given language area.
- Develop project-based work skills and cooperation with others.
- Utilize modern technologies and Artificial Intelligence in language learning.
- Connect linguistic knowledge with other fields, such as history, geography, or sociology.

ASSESSMENT

LANGUAGE B SL		<u>Weighting</u>
External assessment		
Paper 1 SL – 1 hour 15 minutes (30 points) Written Response The student chooses one of three options (e.g., a formal email, article, blog, speech). The assessment focuses on: adherence to format, language register, coherence, and the correct use of language.		25%
Paper 2 SL – 1 hour 45 minutes (65 points) Listening Comprehension (25 points) Reading Comprehension (40 points)		50%
Internal Assessment Individual oral exam, lasting approximately 12–15 minutes. The assessment focuses on: fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and cultural awareness. The conversation is based on a visual stimulus which serves as an introduction to a discussion within one of the five global themes. • Image description (3–4 min) • Guided discussion (4–5 min) • General conversation (5 min)		25%

LANGUAGE B HL		<u>Weighting</u>
External assessment		
Paper 1 HL – 1 hour 30 minutes (30 points) Written Response The student chooses one of three options (e.g., a formal email, article, blog, speech). Assessment criteria include: adherence to format, language register, coherence, and the correct use of language.		25%
Paper 2 HL – 2 hours (65 points) Listening Comprehension (25 points) Reading Comprehension (40 points)		50%
Internal Assessment Individual oral exam, lasting approximately 12–15 minutes. The assessment focuses on: fluency, accuracy, vocabulary, and cultural		25%

awareness. The conversation is based on an excerpt from a literary text, which serves as an introduction to a discussion within one of the five global themes.

- Presentation of the text excerpt (3–4 min)
- Guided discussion (4–5 min)
- General conversation (5 min)

The Group 2 program creates an environment conducive to developing communicative competence, autonomy, and cultural openness. Students learn to use a foreign language as a tool for communication, collaboration, and conscious participation in the modern world.

GROUP 3 INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

Within the field of Social Sciences (Group 3), our school offers the following subjects:

Business Management – In Business Management classes, students examine business operations in local, national, and global contexts. The course provides insight into key business functions, decision-making processes, and the impact of internal and external factors on organisations. Each topic explores four central concepts: creativity, change, ethics, and sustainability.

Economics – The curriculum covers contemporary economic theories, models, and concepts, along with their practical applications in the real world. Particular emphasis is placed on issues of justice and equality, sustainable development, and the interdependence of nations.

Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS) – This interdisciplinary subject integrates the natural sciences with a social perspective, analysing the structure and functioning of environmental systems and the role of human activity in shaping them. Students investigate sustainable development and resource management, assessing how different environmental value systems (EVSs) influence approaches to solving global environmental challenges.

Geography – The subject explores the dynamic interactions between people, places, and the environment at both local and global scales. Students examine contemporary issues such as climate change, urbanisation, and social inequality while developing the ability to evaluate the processes that shape our planet critically.

Philosophy – Students engage with fundamental philosophical ideas concerning truth, freedom, and the nature of the good. Together with their teacher, they read classical philosophical texts, discuss them in depth, construct arguments, and articulate their own perspectives on these enduring questions.

Psychology – This subject investigates how biological, cognitive, social, and cultural factors interact to influence human behaviour.

History – The course focuses primarily on the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Through a comparative approach and examples from various regions of the world, students analyze key historical issues, including political and economic transformations and totalitarian systems.

It is worth noting that History resists simple classification and may also be regarded as a humanities discipline. Like the humanities, the social sciences are empirical fields of study.

The study of any Group 3 subject provides insight into the structure, history, culture, laws, and patterns of societal development. It also enables students to understand the relationship between the individual and society and to recognise how individual actions influence social functioning and change.

Over the course of this two-year programme, students cultivate critical thinking, source analysis, logical reasoning, the evaluation of theories based on academic evidence, and the ability to anticipate social phenomena. They also develop an awareness of cultural and social contexts and gain an understanding of how perspective shapes interpretation. Curiosity and reflective thinking form the foundation of this intellectual journey.

Transferable skills are central to the philosophy of lifelong learning. Within this framework, society is shaped by individuals committed to acquiring and applying knowledge responsibly and effectively.

Lifelong learning enables individuals to address contemporary challenges, both personal and professional, while contributing to the development of a knowledge-based society. The IB Diploma Programme encourages continuous growth, equipping its graduates with a mindset that supports intellectual and personal development throughout their lives.

Selecting one or more subjects from Group 3 is particularly well-suited to students intending to pursue higher education in fields such as law, the humanities, the social sciences, or economics

ASSESSMENT

Standard Level: SL*	Weight*
External assessment	
Paper 1 SL – 1 h - 1 h 45 min (24–50 marks)	25-50%
Paper 2 SL – 1 h - 1 h 45 min (20–60 marks)	25-50%
Internal assessment***	25-30%

Higher Level: HL*	Weight*
External assessment	
Paper 1 HL – 1 h 15 min - 2 h 30 min (24–75 marks)	20-35%
Paper 2 HL – 1 h - 2 h 30 min (20–80 marks)	25-50%
Paper 3 HL – 1 h - 2 h (25–60 marks)**	20-35%
Internal assessment ***	20%

* The values vary slightly depending on the subject.

** The subject *Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS)* is the only Group 3 subject at HL that does not include Paper 3.

*** Internal assessment in individual subjects looks as follows:

- **Business Management:** Students produce a research project about a real business issue or problem facing a particular organization.
- **Economics:** Students produce a portfolio of three commentaries on published extracts from the news media.
- **Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS):** Students produce a written report on the conducted research work.
- **Geography:** Students produce a written report on the fieldwork conducted.
- **Philosophy:** Students write a philosophical analysis of a non-philosophical stimulus.
- **Psychology:** Students design a research proposal to investigate a population of interest using one of the four research methods used in the class practicals.
- **History:** Students investigate a historical topic of their choice. They formulate an inquiry question, identify and choose sources, synthesize information and evaluate sources to produce a response.

GROUP 4 NATURAL SCIENCES

BIOLOGY SL/HL, CHEMISTRY SL/HL, PHYSICS SL/HL, ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND SOCIETIES (ESS) SL/HL

In the IB DP biology, chemistry, physics, and ESS courses, students explore living and non-living systems through shared, cross-cutting themes. They also engage with a range of theoretical frameworks, which help them understand the natural world more broadly. The courses are built around experimental work, where teachers give students space to ask questions, design investigations, collect and analyse data, collaborate with peers, and reflect on, evaluate and share their findings.

Group 4 courses aim to help students:

- develop an interdisciplinary and holistic approach to the sciences,
- learn scientific research methods in theory and in practice,
- develop analytical thinking skills,
- develop creative problem-solving,
- approach issues from both a local and a global perspective,
- develop critical thinking skills and recognise both the possibilities and limitations of science,
- develop technology skills in a scientific context,
- communicate and work in teams effectively,
- develop awareness of the ethical, environmental, economic, cultural and social implications of science.

GROUP 4 SYLLABUS STRUCTURE

Group 4 students at Standard Level (SL) and Higher Level (HL) follow the same core syllabus, a scientific investigation (IA), and a collaborative research project. Practical work in Group 4 subjects is largely the same at SL and HL; HL students additionally cover selected topics at the extended AHL (*additional higher level*) level.

GROUP 4 SYLLABUS COMPONENTS (biology, physics, chemistry, ESS)	Recommended teaching hours	
	SL	HL
Syllabus content	110	180
Core (SL)		
Additional higher level (AHL)		
Experimental programme	40	60
• Practical work	20	40
• Collaborative science project	10	10
• Scientific investigation (IA)	10	10
Total teaching hours	150	240

EXPERIMENTAL PROGRAM

Experiments are used to introduce new topics, carry out scientific investigations and let students test their own questions and hypotheses. The school's experimental programme covers the full scope of practical experimental work, including the safe and competent use of relevant tools, materials and research techniques. Students run their own investigations through lab and fieldwork experiments, databases, simulations and modelling. In doing so, they:

- design scientific experiments,
- collect data,
- develop skills in working with laboratory equipment,
- develop mathematical skills,
- analyse research results,
- evaluate their investigations and draw conclusions.

SCIENTIFIC INVESTIGATION (IA)

The scientific investigation (*Internal Assessment*) is a compulsory individual research project completed by each student over 10 teaching hours in each chosen Group 4 subject. Based on an experiment that they plan and carry out, each student produces a report of up to 3,000 words. The work is then assessed against criteria that place strong emphasis on the ability to plan and carry out scientific research, analyse and evaluate results and draw conclusions. Each component of the work is assessed internally by the teacher and externally moderated by IB examiners. The Internal Assessment (IA) accounts for 20% of the final subject grade.

GROUP 4 COLLABORATIVE SCIENCES PROJECT

A compulsory 10-hour interdisciplinary task in which students from different science subjects (biology, chemistry, physics, ESS, computer science, design technology) work together on a chosen topic. The process and teamwork are assessed rather than the final outcome. The project concludes with a presentation or exhibition of findings for the school community.

ASSESSMENT

PHYSICS SL/HL	Weighting
External assessment	80%
Paper 1 SL - 1 hour 30 minutes (45 Marks), HL - 2 hours (60 Marks) Paper 1A – Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ) Paper 1B – Data-Based Questions The use of calculators is permitted.	36% 44%
Paper 2 SL - 1 hour 30 minutes (50 Marks), 2 hours 30 minutes (90 Marks) Short-answer and extended-response questions The use of calculators is permitted.	
Internal Assessment (10 hours) (24 Marks) Duration: 10 hours Maximum word count is 3,000 words	20%

CHEMISTRY SL/HL	Weighting
External assessment	80%
Paper 1 SL - 1 hour 30 minutes (55 Marks), HL: - 2 hours (75 Marks) Paper 1A – Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ) Paper 1B – Data-Based Questions The use of calculators is permitted	36% 44%
Paper 2 SL - 1 hour 30 minutes (50 Marks); HL - 2 hours 30 minutes (90 Marks) Short-answer and extended-response questions The use of calculators is permitted.	
Internal Assessment (10 hours) (24 Marks) Duration: 10 hours Maximum word count is 3,000 words	20%

ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS AND SOCIETIES SL/HL		Weighting
External assessment		80%
Paper 1 SL – 1 hour, HL – 2 hours		25% (SL) 30% (HL)
Students will be provided with data in a variety of forms relating to a specific, previously unseen case study. Questions will be based on the analysis and evaluation of the data in the case study.		
Paper 2 SL - 2 hours, HL - 2 hours 30 minutes		50 % (SL/HL)
Section A is made up of short-answer and data-based questions. Section B requires students to answer structured essay questions.		
Internal Assessment (10 hours) (24 Marks)		25% (SL)
Duration: 10 hours		20%(HL)
Maximum word count is 3,000 words		

BIOLOGY SL/HL		Weighting
External assessment		80%
Paper 1 SL - 1 hour and 30 minutes (55 Marks), HL - (2 hours) (75 Marks)		36%
Paper 1A – Multiple-Choice Questions (MCQ)		44%
Paper 1B – Data-Based Questions that are syllabus related, addressing all themes		
The use of calculators is permitted.		
Paper 2 SL - (1 hour 30 minutes) (50 Marks), HL - (2 hours 30 minutes) (80 Marks)		
Section A – Data-Based and short answer Questions		20%
Section B – Extended-Response Questions		
The use of calculators is permitted		
Internal Assessment (10 hours) (24 Marks)		
Duration: 10 hours		
Maximum word count is 3,000 words		

GROUP 5 MATHEMATICS

Mathematics is a compulsory subject for all students enrolled in the IB Diploma Programme; however, they may select one of four mathematics courses offered within Group 5, namely:

- Applications and Interpretation SL
- Analysis and Approaches SL
- Applications and Interpretation HL
- Analysis and Approaches HL

At the standard level, students study the subject for four hours per week, whereas at the higher level it is allocated six hours per week.

Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation SL is the most accessible mathematics course offered within Group 5. It focuses on the practical application of mathematics in real-world contexts, such as biology and economics. The course covers topics including mathematical modelling, graph analysis, statistics, probability, and data analysis. It also places a strong emphasis on the use of technology, particularly a graphic display calculator.

Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches SL is a more demanding and comprehensive mathematics course that places greater emphasis on algebra, mathematical proof, and symbolic manipulation. It engages with more abstract concepts and focuses, in particular, on differential and integral calculus, often requiring manual problem-solving without reliance on technology. The course also incorporates practical applications of mathematics.

Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation HL is a significantly more advanced and substantially more demanding extension of the applications-based mathematics course. It includes an extensive treatment of differential and integral calculus, incorporating elements of differential equations. The statistics component is further developed to include additional hypothesis tests, non-linear regression models, and methods of model fitting. Moreover, the course covers topics such as matrix theory, graph theory, vectors, complex numbers, logistic, trigonometric, and logarithmic models, as well as Markov chains, among others.

Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches HL, like **Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation HL**, represents a significantly more rigorous and comprehensive extension of the standard level course, with both HL levels options being broadly comparable in terms of difficulty. The curriculum includes an advanced treatment of differential and integral calculus, including elements of differential equations, alongside Taylor series and a comprehensive theory of functions. Furthermore, it encompasses continuous probability distributions, advanced trigonometric methods, vectors in three-dimensional space, inverse functions, polynomials, complex numbers, and formal mathematical reasoning, including proofs by mathematical induction.

As part of the IB Diploma Programme, all students are required to complete an individual written exploration in mathematics. This component is mandatory and accounts for 20% of the overall mathematics assessment. The assignment consists of a short investigative project done over the course of the programme and is typically completed during the final year.

Additionally, students at Standard Level take two written examination papers, while those at Higher Level take three.

ASSESSMENT

Analysis and Approaches			
SL level		HL level	
assessment components	weighting	assessment components	weighting
Mathematical exploration 12-20 pages 0 – 20 marks	20%	Mathematical exploration 12-20 pages 0 – 20 marks	20%
Paper One A written examination consisting of short- and extended-response questions. examination duration: 90 min 0 – 80 marks without GDC	40%	Paper One A written examination consisting of short- and extended-response questions. examination duration: 120 min 0 – 110 marks without GDC	30%
Paper Two	40%	Paper Two	30%

A written examination consisting of short- and extended-response questions. czas trwania: 90 min 0 – 80 marks with GDC		A written examination consisting of short- and extended-response questions. examination duration: 120 min 0 – 110 marks with GDC	
		Paper 3 A written examination consisting of two extended-response questions/problems examination duration: 75 min 0 – 55 marks with GDC	20%

Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is one of the key elements of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. It helps students think independently and better understand the world around them.

Unlike most subjects, TOK does not focus on memorising facts. Students learn how to ask questions and think critically, exploring how we know something is true, who we can trust, and why interpretations differ.

During lessons, students work with knowledge questions—general questions about how knowledge is created and what its limits are. TOK also highlights that knowledge is not always completely objective. Our understanding of the world is shaped by factors such as culture, language, experience, and values. Therefore, students learn to evaluate the reliability of information, recognize bias and manipulation, and distinguish facts from opinions. These skills are especially important in today’s media-driven world.

An important part of the course involves students reflecting on their own thinking. They examine how they form beliefs and identify possible errors in their reasoning. This process helps students become more aware and responsible when making decisions.

TOK also takes a practical approach. Students regularly connect topics discussed in class to real-life situations, such as social issues, media content, and technological developments. In doing so, they see that critical thinking applies to the real world.

The TOK course consists of three main elements. The first is the core theme, Knowledge and the Knower, which explores the relationship between the individual and knowledge. Students also study various Areas of Knowledge, such as mathematics, natural sciences, human sciences, history, the arts, and indigenous knowledge systems. Optional themes are chosen by the school and focus on specific contexts in which knowledge operates.

TOK lessons foster discussion and active student participation. In class, students collaborate to explore questions about what knowledge is, where it comes from, and how to evaluate it. They regularly use real-life examples, such as social events, scientific discoveries, and media messages. These examples help them connect theory with practice. Lessons often feature debates, case studies, and short written tasks. These activities help students develop clear, well-structured arguments. Another important aspect requires students to compare different perspectives and identify the assumptions behind particular claims. The teacher primarily facilitates discussion rather than simply delivering information, thereby supporting students' intellectual independence.

Assessment in TOK relies on two main components that together form the final grade. The first, the TOK Exhibition, accounts for one-third of the final mark. In this task, students select a question from a prescribed list of 35 prompts and explore it using three real-world objects. For each object, students write a commentary that explains its relevance to the chosen prompt. The teacher assesses this work, and external moderators review it. Students typically complete the exhibition at the end of the first year of the IB programme.

The second component, the TOK Essay, carries greater weight and accounts for two-thirds of the final grade. Students write an essay on one of the prescribed IB titles, presenting their own arguments and supporting them with relevant examples. IB examiners externally assess the essay, focusing on the clarity of reasoning, depth of analysis, and understanding of the nature of knowledge. IB examiners award the final TOK grade on a scale from A to E. This grade is combined with the Extended Essay result, allowing students to earn additional points toward the IB Diploma.

Extended Essay (EE)

The Extended Essay (EE) is one of the key elements of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. It allows students to conduct independent research on a chosen topic, developing academic skills in preparation for university-level work. For many, it is their first experience writing a substantial, structured academic paper.

Unlike typical school assignments, the Extended Essay is a substantial research project. Students select a subject from the IB curriculum and develop a focused research question. The topic should enable detailed analysis and be engaging for the student. Students plan research, evaluate sources, and present findings clearly and logically.

During the process, students work with a supervisor (a teacher), who supports them at each stage, helps refine the topic, and provides guidance on structure and research methods. At the same time, the essay is largely independent work, meaning that students are responsible for organising their time, managing their research, and meeting deadlines. This process helps develop responsibility and self-discipline.

A vital part of the Extended Essay is fostering critical and analytical thinking. Students interpret data, compare views, and build arguments based on evidence, rather than simply report facts. They also adopt academic conventions, such as referencing and avoiding plagiarism.

The Extended Essay develops independent learning, analytical problem-solving, long-term planning, and academic writing. These abilities are crucial for success at university, where students are expected to learn independently and take initiative.

The essay must not exceed 4,000 words and follow a clear structure, including an introduction, main body, and conclusion. The form depends on the chosen subject. In science, the essay may include data analysis or experiments. In the humanities, it often focuses on interpretation and argumentation.

The process of writing the Extended Essay involves several steps: choosing a topic, developing a research question, collecting information, creating an outline, writing drafts, and reflecting on the process as a whole. Students also participate in required reflection sessions with their supervisor. In these sessions, they discuss progress and receive guidance on further work.

Assessment of the Extended Essay is carried out externally by IB examiners. The essay is evaluated based on criteria such as focus and method, knowledge and understanding, quality of analysis, argumentation, structure, and student engagement in the research process. The final grade is awarded on a scale from A to E.

The result of the Extended Essay is combined with the TOK grade, allowing students to earn up to 3 additional points toward the IB Diploma. This makes the EE not only an important academic experience but also a significant part of the overall IB assessment system.

Creativity – Activity – Service (CAS)

What is CAS?

CAS stands for Creativity, Activity, Service — a core component of the IB Diploma Programme that supports students' development not only academically, but also personally, encouraging them to discover their potential beyond the classroom.

At its core, CAS is based on experiential learning: learning through doing, reflecting, and discovering. It encourages students to step outside their comfort zones, try new activities, and engage with the world in meaningful ways. Rather than adding pressure, CAS is intended to be personal, flexible, and inspiring — a journey shaped by each student's interests, passions, and goals.

The Three Strands of CAS

Creativity

Students explore their imagination and express themselves through a variety of creative pursuits. This may include writing, designing, performing, or producing original work. The Creativity strand offers opportunities to think innovatively and develop new perspectives.

Activity

Students engage in physical activities that contribute to their well-being. This may include sports, dance, or personal fitness goals, promoting a healthy and balanced lifestyle.

Service

Students make a positive contribution to their communities through meaningful and voluntary engagement that benefits both themselves and others. This strand is often the most transformative, fostering empathy, responsibility, and initiative.

The CAS Journey

CAS is not about perfection; it is about progress and personal challenge. Students' experiences should extend beyond what is familiar while remaining achievable, meaningful, and engaging.

Over approximately 18 months, students are expected to:

- Participate regularly in CAS experiences, ideally on a weekly basis
- Maintain a CAS Portfolio documenting their journey, including reflections and evidence of participation
- Reflect on their experiences and learning
- Engage in a balanced range of Creativity, Activity, and Service experiences
- Complete a CAS Project, a collaborative experience lasting at least one month

Reflection: The Key to Growth

Reflection is central to CAS, as it enables students to understand what they have learned and how they have developed.

Effective reflection may include:

- Describing what occurred
- Expressing feelings and reactions
- Generating ideas and new perspectives
- Posing questions that deepen understanding

Through reflection, experiences become meaningful and impactful.

Learning Outcomes

By the end of CAS, students are required to demonstrate achievement in seven learning outcomes, including:

- Recognising strengths and areas for growth
- Undertaking new challenges
- Working collaboratively
- Demonstrating commitment and perseverance
- Engaging with global and local issues

These outcomes are not formally assessed; rather, they serve as evidence of students' personal development.

CAS and Academic Subjects

CAS may be meaningfully connected to academic subjects in creative ways, such as organising a science club, teaching languages, or creating art for a community initiative.

However, CAS remains distinct from formal coursework and provides students with opportunities to explore learning in a more personal and practical context.

Why CAS Matters

Successful completion of CAS is a requirement for the award of the IB Diploma. However, CAS is far more than a programme requirement — it is a journey of self-discovery and personal growth.

Through CAS, students are encouraged to:

- Build confidence and independence
- Develop practical, real-world skills
- Discover personal interests and passions
- Form meaningful connections with others
- Experience learning beyond the classroom

For many students, CAS becomes one of the most memorable and rewarding aspects of the IB experience.

Final Thought

CAS provides students with opportunities to create, participate actively, contribute to society, and grow as individuals. When approached with curiosity and openness, CAS can significantly enrich a student's educational experience and contribute meaningfully to personal development.