



The IB Middle Years Programme

A guide for universities
and governments

What is the **IB**?

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a recognized leader in the field of international education. IB programmes encourage students to be reflective, active and lifelong learners and critical thinkers. IB students are forever curious, fully engaged citizens, who both embrace their own culture and are open and responsive to other cultures and views.

Founded in 1968, the IB currently works with over 2,500 schools in 131 countries to develop and offer three challenging programmes to over 600,000 students aged 3 to 19 years.

We value our hard earned reputation for quality, high standards and pedagogical leadership. We promote intercultural understanding and respect, not as an alternative to a sense of cultural and national identity, but as an essential part of life in the 21st century. At its heart, the IB is motivated by a mission to create a better world through education.

All of this is captured in our mission statement.

The IB mission statement

The International Baccalaureate 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.

"The MYP is an imaginative and innovative curriculum framework, designed to allow young people to develop academically and personally. The opportunities afforded by the interdisciplinary study and the five areas of interaction mean it is an excellent preparation for studying the IB Diploma Programme, fostering independent learning and instilling the core set of values at the IB's heart. An MYP student is not just well qualified for studying the Diploma Programme, but also for university and the world of work."

Katy Ricks - Head of Sevenoaks School, UK

What are **IB** programmes?

93% of IB World Schools consider the smooth transition the MYP provides into the Diploma Programme an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP.

We offer a high quality education through our three continuously evolving and widely respected programmes, for students aged 3 to 19, working in close cooperation with IB World Schools.

The three programmes span the years from kindergarten to pre-university and can be offered individually or as a continuum.

The **IB Primary Years Programme**, for students aged 3 to 12, focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside.

The **IB Middle Years Programme**, for students aged 11 to 16, provides a framework of academic challenge that encourages students to embrace and understand the connections between traditional subjects and the real world, and to become critical and reflective thinkers.

The **IB Diploma Programme**, for students aged 16 to 19, is an academically challenging and balanced programme of education, with final examinations, that prepares students for success at university and in life beyond.

Each programme includes a curriculum and pedagogy, student assessment appropriate to the age range, professional development for teachers, and a process of school authorization and evaluation.

The three programmes have a common educational framework: a consistent philosophy about teaching and learning that focuses on the development of the whole child, and an overarching concept of how to develop international-mindedness.

Each programme promotes the education of the whole person, emphasizing intellectual, emotional,

social and physical growth, involving the traditions of learning in languages, humanities, sciences, mathematics and the arts.

Each programme is self-contained, since there is no requirement for schools to offer more than one programme, but these programmes also provide the opportunity for schools to offer a continuous international educational experience from early childhood through to school graduation.

The IB's mission statement and the IB learner profile connect the three programmes, articulating the learning outcomes for IB students of all ages. The commonalities and differences between the programmes are identified in the IB document *Programme standards and practices*. These standards and practices are a set of criteria against which both the IB World School and the IB can measure success in the implementation of the three programmes.

The driving force behind all IB programmes is a deeply held philosophy about the nature of international education. This philosophy is reflected firstly in the IB mission statement, which expresses the IB's overall purpose as an organization promoting and developing programmes of international education, and secondly in the IB learner profile, which is the IB mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century.

The 10 aspirational qualities of the learner profile represent the essence of the programmes and describe the kind of student who, in establishing a personal set of values, will be laying the foundation upon which international-mindedness will develop and flourish.

"MYP students study a broad range of subjects in addition to connecting threads that affect humanity—the areas of interaction. The rigour of the MYP is an excellent preparation for the IB Diploma Programme and hence success at university, a focus on lifelong learning and preparation for the adult world."

Anne Fowles - Head of School, Beijing BISS International School, People's Republic of China

IB learners strive to be:

- *inquirers*
- *knowledgeable*
- *thinkers*
- *communicators*
- *principled*
- *open-minded*
- *caring*
- *risk-takers*
- *balanced*
- *reflective.*

Siriporn (Simmi) Ghai

As a new student to the New International School of Thailand (NIST), I was not accustomed to the MYP. Words like "criteria" and "approaches to learning" took me a while to understand but I eventually got there. Once I got used to the system, only then was I able to truly do my best in school.

My mother started the Thai-Indian Red Cross team so it was easy for me to take part in this for my community service. I would visit orphanages with friends, help the Red Cross with blood donations at the temple and also help with trips out of the city, donating to the less fortunate.

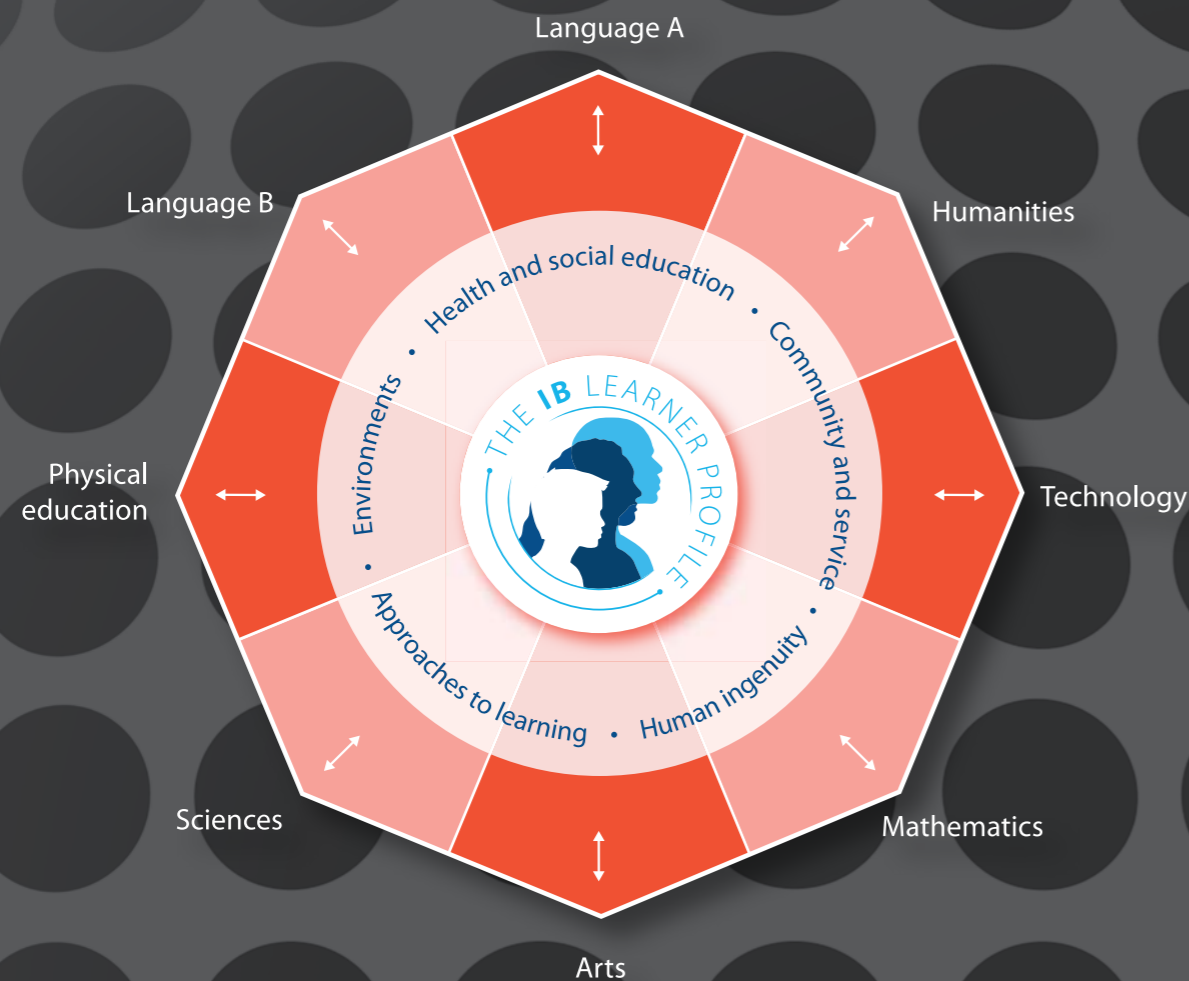
My personal project taught me what it really meant to be patient, dedicated and committed, and the real meaning of time management. I was able to attend IB conferences, where I represented NIST. The personal project was my stepping stone into the Diploma Programme, where the previous four years of my education was first tested. I am currently studying medicine, firstly at Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok, and now the University of Manchester, UK.

The MYP gave me an opportunity to think for myself.

Simmi



What is the IB Middle Years Programme?



The programme model

88% of IB World Schools consider pedagogy (constructivist approach, including student inquiry into significant content in real-world contexts) an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP.

70% of IB World Schools consider ability and flexibility to develop course content (using MYP framework) an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP.

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) is a programme of study designed to meet the educational requirements of students aged between 11 and 16 years.

The MYP offers a curricular framework that allows school-specific—national, state, provincial or other—and subject-specific curricular requirements to be met, while maintaining the IB mission and philosophy. The MYP requires schools to teach a broad and balanced choice of subjects in every year of the programme, organized into eight subject groups:

- language A (ideally, the student's mother tongue)
- language B (a second modern language)
- humanities
- sciences
- mathematics
- arts
- physical education
- technology.

The programme model is based on the concept of balance. This is important for a number of reasons.

- The programme provides learning in a broad base of disciplines to ensure that students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to prepare for the future.

- The subject—group objectives include skills, attitudes and knowledge in addition to the understanding of concepts; the aim is to ensure that students are not only knowledgeable about a subject area, but also develop a genuine understanding of ideas and an ability to apply these in new contexts, in preparation for further learning.
- The programme promotes the principle of concurrency of learning, whereby students deal with a balanced curriculum each year in which different subjects are studied simultaneously. As students mature and develop higher-order thinking skills, they explore the disciplines in increasing depth and realize how they are linked to each other and to local and global issues.
- The programme encourages the use of a variety of teaching and learning methodologies to foster a climate in which students discover how they learn best in different situations.
- The programme emphasizes the development of the whole person— affective, cognitive, creative and physical—and its effective implementation depends on the school's concern for the whole educational experience, including what students learn outside the classroom.

MYP fundamental concepts

38% of MYP graduates achieve bilingual IB diplomas.

Children are confronted with a vast and often bewildering array of choices. The MYP is designed to provide students with the values and opportunities that will enable them to develop sound judgment. From its beginning, the MYP has been guided by three fundamental concepts that are rooted in the IB mission statement. These three fundamental concepts are:

- holistic learning
- intercultural awareness
- communication.

"The MYP curricular model articulates a much needed bridge between what is typically learned in schools and the most pressing questions that concern our societies."

"The MYP emphasizes rigorous learning in the disciplines and interdisciplinary synergy, inviting students to tackle relevant issues—from climate change to globalization—thus preparing them for the work of the next generation."

Veronica Boix-Mansilla - Lecturer on Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education, USA

"Categorically yes, we would accept the MYP as a qualification for sixth-form entry. The MYP is at least comparable with GCSE."

Stuart Westley - The Master, Haileybury College, UK

"The biggest advantage of the MYP is that it enables students to transfer smoothly from the MYP to the Diploma Programme. The MYP teaches students to take initiative, to research and find out the answers by themselves."

Machiko Tanaka - Japanese parent of two MYP students

What makes the **MYP** unique?

83% of IB World Schools consider philosophy an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP.

MYP students:

- build upon their spirit of discovery to develop an understanding and enjoyment of the process of learning, independently and in cooperation with others
- acquire knowledge, understanding and skills, and prepare for further learning
- recognize the extent to which knowledge is interrelated
- learn to communicate effectively in a variety of ways
- develop a sense of personal and cultural identity and a respect for themselves and for others
- acquire insights into local and global concerns affecting health, the community and the environment, and develop a sense of individual and collective responsibility and citizenship.

The areas of interaction provide the MYP with its unique core. Teaching subject areas through these contexts allows teaching and learning to focus on attitudes, values and skills.

The areas of interaction:

Approaches to learning (ATL) represents general and subject-specific learning skills that the student will develop and apply during the programme and beyond. The focus of this area is on teaching students how to learn and on helping students find out about themselves as learners so that they can develop learning skills.

Community and service considers how a student engages with his or her immediate family, classmates and friends as well as in the outside world as a member of these communities. Through effective planning and teaching, students can learn about their place within communities and be motivated to act in a new context.

Health and social education looks at the range of human issues that exists in human societies, such as social structures, relationships and health. This area can be used by students to find out how these issues affect societies, communities and individuals, including students themselves. Through the area of health and social education, students can identify and develop skills that will enable them to function as effective members of societies, as well as learning about how they are changing and how to make informed decisions that may relate to their welfare.

Environments considers how humans interact with the world at large and the parts we play in our environments. It extends into areas beyond human issues and asks students to examine the interrelationships of different environments. This area can lead students to consider both their immediate classroom environments and global environments.

Human ingenuity deals with the way in which human minds have influenced the world, for example, the way we are, think, interact with each other, create, cause and find solutions to problems, transform ideas and rationalize thought. It also considers the consequences of human thought and action. Through this area of interaction students can develop ways of thinking that are a good preparation for the theory of knowledge course in the Diploma Programme.



Areas of interaction

44% of MYP graduates obtain a grade A or B, and 85% of MYP graduates obtain a grade A, B or C, in the theory of knowledge (TOK) course in the Diploma Programme.

The areas of interaction are unique in that they:

- give meaning to what is learned through the investigation of real-world issues
- provide the contexts for learning and for the MYP fundamental concepts and the IB learner profile, which underpin the philosophy of the programme
- encourage critical thinking skills to deepen understanding

- provide a framework for student inquiry
- can help students develop positive attitudes and a sense of personal and social responsibility
- engage students in reflection to better understand themselves as learners
- can lead students from academic knowledge to thoughtful action
- provide a platform for learning across subjects
- provide a common language for constructing and organizing the curriculum.



Pawarit (Poom) Kreepok

The MYP made me realize that many skills are required for a successful career, not just logical thinking. With a wide array of subjects from the sciences and languages to design technology, the MYP encourages a person to acquire all these skills and teaches them to be ready for every aspect of their career.

It has also taught me to be more independent, manage my time wisely, and be more organized. At first, I struggled to keep up with the workload, however, all the hard work was really worth it as the fast pace became natural and my grades started to

improve drastically. The MYP was a vital preparation for the IB Diploma Programme.

The personal project was a major aspect of the MYP. Having an independent one-year project with my own timeline at the age of 15 was very challenging. Yet, it was enjoyable and really made me a more independent and organized person. I am currently studying economics and computer science at the University of California, Berkeley. Thanks to the MYP, I will always look back and reflect on those experiences positively.



What is the personal project?

38% of MYP graduates obtain a grade A or B, and 78% of MYP graduates obtain a grade A, B or C, in the extended essay in the Diploma Programme.

Examples of personal project titles:

Can I raise awareness of the futility of war?

Can I create a 10-minute stand-up comedy routine about life in Hong Kong?

The personal project holds a very important place in the programme in that it provides an excellent opportunity for students to produce a truly personal piece of work of their choice and to demonstrate the skills they have developed through the MYP experience. It is a reflection of students' ability to manage and direct their own inquiry and is a significant body of work produced over an extended period. The process of completing the personal project is led by the student, with supervision from a teacher. The student is required to demonstrate the appropriate commitment, as well as the ability and initiative to work independently.

As shown in the programme model, and exemplified in other MYP documents, the five areas of interaction form the core of the programme: they are addressed through the subjects; they bind various disciplines together; they are the focus of varied learning experiences through project work, interdisciplinary activities and real-life community involvement. Although the areas of interaction are not awarded individual grades, they are central to the experience of the personal project, which is intended to be the culmination of the student's involvement with the five areas of interaction; the project is therefore completed during the final year of the MYP. It also serves as good preparation for those students who go on to complete the IB Diploma Programme.

The personal project is a summative assessment of students' ability to work independently. The areas of interaction are used to focus student learning.

What are the requirements for the **MYP** and certificate?

Schools are required to teach a broad and balanced choice of subjects in every year of the programme, including at least one subject from each of the eight subject groups. The IB publishes guides to each of the subject groups. These guides state the aims and objectives of each subject group, which are prescribed for all schools offering the MYP.

The total teaching time for each subject group may vary from year to year and from school to school. However, to ensure significant learning in each subject group and to support the concept of a balanced programme, the IB stipulates a minimum time allocation of 50 teaching hours per subject group per year of the programme. Despite this minimum requirement, most subject groups will receive a considerably longer time allocation in each year of the programme; schools must decide for themselves how much longer each subject group will need.

The grade awarded for each subject group and the personal project ranges from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest).

The IB will issue an MYP certificate to each student who satisfies a number of conditions. The student must:

- be registered, and have gained at least a grade 2 in at least one subject per subject group of the MYP
- have gained at least a grade 3 for the personal project
- have participated in the programme for at least the final two years
- have met the expectations of community and service to the satisfaction of the school
- have gained a grade total of at least 36 from the eight subject groups and the personal project combined, out of a possible maximum of 63.

If more than one subject has been entered in a given subject group, only the single best grade will count towards certification, although all subject results will appear on the MYP record of achievement.

**For information regarding subject areas or assessment criteria please contact myp@ibo.org.*

"Before the MYP at Broughton, the kids would not be encouraged to take foreign language every year. The MYP has pulled the school up to a new level. It has totally changed the culture of the school."

Wynn Cherry - IB Coordinator, Broughton IB Magnet High School, Raleigh, NC, USA

"The past two years our Diploma Programme graduates have performed markedly better than in previous years, thus further enhancing their marketability for university admission. Why? Well, I believe it's quite simple: the outstanding preparation for the IB Diploma Programme that the MYP provides. They are superior learners to the previous graduates who had not enjoyed the benefit of the preparation the MYP provides. From the principled inquiry base of the curriculum, to the structure and guidance of the personal project, the MYP continues to prove that it's outstanding. A student who has learned through the MYP will prove to be steps ahead of peers who haven't been as fortunate."

Bevin Clark - College and Careers Counsellor, New International School of Thailand (NIST), Thailand



How are students assessed?

27% of MYP graduates gain 35+ points in the Diploma Programme.

57% of MYP graduates gain 30+ points in the Diploma Programme.

79% of IB World Schools consider academic rigour an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP.

An essential principle of IB assessment is that standards are the same worldwide.

Assessment in the MYP is best described as internal because the assessment tasks, strategies and tools are designed, developed and applied by teachers working with students in their schools. The IB believes that teachers are best placed to assess the work of their MYP students; the assessment model supports the professional judgment of the teacher in deciding the levels of achievements of individual students.

The MYP assessment model is described as criterion-related, as it is based upon pre-determined criteria. The MYP identifies a set of objectives for each subject group, which are directly related to the assessment criteria of that particular subject group. Teachers are responsible for structuring varied and valid assessment tasks that will allow students to demonstrate achievement according to the required objectives within each subject group. These include open-ended, problem-solving activities and investigations, organized debates, tests and examinations, hands-on experimentation, analysis and reflection.

The most important aim of MYP assessment is to support and encourage student learning, recognizing the importance of assessing the processes as well as the products of learning.

IB-validated final grades, records of achievement and MYP certificates can only be awarded if a school undergoes moderation.

Externally validated assessment

The flexibility of the MYP model, in terms of wide-ranging subject content, encourages different styles of teaching and the use of varied assessment strategies, tasks and tools. In all cases, MYP students are assessed internally by teachers, according to the criteria defined in the MYP.

If the IB is to issue validated subject grades it must ensure that common standards are being applied by all schools, in different years, and to different subjects.

The IB does not provide external examinations and does not enforce a formal examination structure. All schools are responsible for developing the appropriate assessments for their students according to the objectives and criteria published in the subject-group guides. The IB does offer external moderation for schools. The moderation offered by the IB refers to the review of the assessments used by the school and provides feedback on where the school is doing well and areas for improvement.

For the **moderation** process, schools must each year submit samples of assessed student work in each of the MYP subjects and the personal project from the final year of the programme to external moderators appointed by the IB. Through this process, the IB ensures that schools and teachers are using the appropriate MYP standards in assessing their students. If moderation reveals, for example, that a school has not been meeting the standards set by the IB, the achievement levels on students' certificates may be adjusted. The aim is to provide levels the moderators regard as more representative of students' achievement.

The moderation process is designed to ensure that teachers around the world are successfully using and implementing the criteria defined by the IB in the MYP assessment model.

Monitoring of assessment is a process that provides support and guidance to schools with regards to internal assessment procedures and practices. In this process, the schools benefit from the expertise of trained moderators and experienced MYP subject specialists. Monitoring of assessment helps schools apply MYP assessment principles to their own local practices.

Monitoring of assessment differs from external moderation and is not linked to validation of students' grades. All MYP schools must participate in either moderation or monitoring of assessment, prior to programme evaluation visits.

For more information on MYP subject criteria or assessment please email myp@ibo.org.

How do schools implement **IB** programmes?

78% of IB World Schools consider quality assurance an important and influential factor in selecting the MYP.

Through its quality assurance framework the IB closely monitors the delivery of the MYP. All MYP schools are subject to authorization and evaluation processes according to the *Programme standards and practices*: a document which provides a set of criteria against which the IB World School and the IB can measure success in the implementation of the programme.

Any school wishing to offer an IB programme must be authorized to do so. The requirements for authorization are the same for all schools. The process of becoming an IB World School is designed to ensure schools are well prepared to implement an IB programme successfully.

Evaluation of how the programme is working in a school takes place every four to five years in all IB World Schools.

For more information on becoming an IB World School please visit <http://www.ibo.org/myp/become/>.

Professional development

The IB trains thousands of teachers and administrators at workshops, online and at events around the world. These events bring together teachers and workshop leaders from many countries

and cultures, encouraging IB educators to constantly reflect upon and improve their practice. There are mandatory workshops for schools seeking authorization to offer an IB programme.

Adisara (Zen) Puangchompoo

I enjoyed the variety of classes that my MYP education offered but also felt that the links between the subjects kept me interested in my studies. During my time in school I had the opportunity to be involved in different activities. I entered different international art competitions, I joined the student council where I was a student representative for community services and I enjoyed playing soccer, tennis, and softball for my school. Taking part in the annual fashion shows and school assemblies were a highlight for me.

I now study BA (Hons) Drawing at Camberwell College of Art and Design in London. The transition was not difficult since the IB had prepared me so well. I am grateful to have been through and come out of IB with those precious experiences and memorable moments, because I could never imagine being who I am now without it.



"The leadership of the MYP is currently making commendable and significant strides in bringing together this international community of learning institutions to ensure high quality, relevant, and rigorous experiences for learners in the MYP throughout the world. The leaders and problem solvers of tomorrow will need these skills and global perspectives. The MYP can and does make a difference."

David Ghoogasian - Director, The Lyceum, California, USA

Sources

MYP and Diploma Programme statistics generated by IB information, communication and technology, January 2009.

Data collected from MYP and Diploma Programme coordinators in IB World Schools, September 2008.

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