



2020-2021

IB Diploma Course Descriptions

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Introduction

This guide is intended for students and parents as an outline of the courses and programmes offered at ISA in grades 11 and 12. The descriptions provided are relatively brief, but more details can be obtained from the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) Coordinator, teachers, and heads of departments.

As you review this document and consider potential courses for next year, we recommend that you reflect on some of the core values that underpin the IB, values that are captured in its 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 organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

We believe that students who graduate from ISA are well prepared for lifelong learning, and that the IB programmes and our school help students develop the skills necessary to learn how to learn. ISA teachers' focus is on teaching for genuine understanding, challenging students' assumptions about the nature of knowledge and requiring them to construct sound, informed perspectives on a wide range of subjects.

This document includes information and text that have been taken from published IB Diploma course guides.

Please let us know if you have any questions about the information included in this guide.

Matthew E. Sipple
Head of Upper School

February 2020

ISA High School Diploma Requirements

In order to be awarded an ISA High School Diploma, a student must have earned a minimum of 25 course credits in grades 9-12, including:

- 4 credits in English
- 2 credits in an additional language (in the same language)
- 3 credits in Individuals and societies
- 3 credits in Sciences (4 recommended)
- 3 credits in Mathematics (4 recommended)
- 2 credits in the Arts
- 3 credits in Physical and Health Education (at ISA, PHE is a full credit course in grades 9 and 10; it is a 0.5 credit course in grades 11 and 12)
- 5 additional credits of the student's choice

... and have satisfactorily completed the requirements of Creativity, activity and service in grades 11 and 12.

Special circumstances:

- Students who do not possess a level of English sufficient to permit full scheduling of courses, or students who have not completed the graduation requirements by the end of grade 12 may, on the judgement of the administration, receive a certificate of attendance in place of an ISA High School Diploma.
- Individual cases will be reviewed by the administration and school counsellors.

Any final decision regarding re-enrolment of the student will be made by the Director upon the advice of the Head of Upper School.

ISA's course offerings in grades 11 and 12 are based on a wide range of IB Diploma subjects, enriched by physical education for all students. Students who elect not to follow the full IB Diploma Programme are able to choose from among the school's IB Diploma course offerings to build a challenging academic programme and are described as IB Diploma Course Candidates.

Grade 11 and 12 students choose one of the following programme combinations:

ISA High School Diploma
+
IB Diploma

ISA High School Diploma
+
IB DP Course Certificates

The IB Diploma years: Grades 11 and 12

The International School of Amsterdam embraces the International Baccalaureate programmes in all phases of its curriculum. In grades 11 and 12, all students choose from among a wide range of courses in order to pursue an ISA High School Diploma. In addition to this, some students choose to pursue DP Course Certificates, while others choose to pursue the full IB Diploma.

As represented in the below diagram, the IB Diploma Programme stipulates that students study six subjects over a two-year period. These six subjects must include:

1. Studies in language and literature (student's home language/strongest language)
2. Language acquisition (a second modern language) or an additional course from Group 1
3. Individuals and societies (economics, geography, global politics, history, ITGS)
4. Sciences (nature of science, physics, chemistry or biology)
5. Mathematics
6. The arts (visual art, theatre studies, film or music) or an additional course from one of the previous groups, with the exception of mathematics

For IB Diploma candidates, three or more courses must be studied at the higher level (HL) and three at the standard level (SL). Whereas, students pursuing IB Course Certificates may take any combination of HL and SL courses available. IB Diploma candidates who may wish to pursue a different combination than outlined by the requirements above must consult with the DP Coordinator; non-regular Diplomas are rarely approved by the IB and are subject to supporting evidence.

All IB Diploma candidates complete an extended essay under the supervision of an advisor on a topic of their choice between the end of April of grade 11 and November of grade 12. They also take part in an interdisciplinary course titled *theory of knowledge (TOK)* and they participate in creativity, activity, service (CAS), a programme promoting activity and service in the community.

Descriptions of these elements of the programme can be found at the end of this booklet.



Grade Level Promotion Criteria

Please note that these grade level promotion criteria define the typical expectations for current ISA students. New students joining ISA in grade 11 will be considered based on their individual academic record.

For promotion to grade 11, a student must:

- Have earned a minimum of 14 course credits from grades 9 and 10 including:
 - 2 credits in English
 - 1 credit in individuals and societies
 - 1 credit in mathematics and/or approval from department
 - 1 credit in sciences and/or approval from department
 - 2 credits in physical and health education
- Have a satisfactory attendance record (students must attend at least 80% of the classes in each subject in order to receive credit).
- Enrol in a programme with a minimum of 5 academic courses, excluding physical education

For promotion to grade 12, a student must:

- Have earned a minimum of 20 course credits from grades 9, 10 and 11 including:
 - 3 credits in English
 - 1 credit in language acquisition
 - 2 credits in individuals and societies
 - 2 credits in sciences
 - 2 credits in mathematics
 - 1 credit in the arts
 - 2.5 credits in physical and health education
- Have a satisfactory attendance record (students must attend at least 80% of the classes in each subject in order to receive credit).
- Enrol in a programme with a minimum of 5 academic courses, excluding physical education

Choosing pathways: HS Diploma plus *IB Diploma* or *DP Course Certificates*?

In the Diploma Years at ISA, students have the opportunity to choose the pathway that best matches their approaches to learning and academic achievement and which fits their future goals. In choosing whether to pursue an ISA HS Diploma in combination with either DP Course Certificates or a full IB Diploma, students are supported by advisors, counsellors, the DP Coordinator and the Assistant Head of Upper School.

While all courses offered in grades 11-12 are DP courses, some students may wish to select combinations which are outside of the guidelines of the IB. For example, a student may not wish to take HL courses (Courses), a student may wish to study three sciences (non-regular Diploma) or a student may wish to study two arts subjects (Courses). Some of these students may opt for course certificates, while others may wish to apply for a non-regular IB Diploma, in consultation with their counsellor and the DP Coordinator.

Counsellors will work actively with students to support them in making this important decision. Here is an overview of helpful aspects to consider:

| | DP Candidate (full) | DP Course Certificate Candidate |
|-------------------|---|---|
| Subjects | One per group 1-6 <i>Or one each from groups 1-5, plus an additional course from groups 1-4.</i> | No IB requirements <i>Consider ISA graduation requirements when choosing courses.</i> |
| HL courses | Three* <i>For success in HL courses, students should earn at least a 5 in the equivalent MYP course. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Head of Upper School, in consultation with the relevant Head of Department, counsellor and DP Coordinator.</i> | Not required <i>Note that students are welcome to study courses at HL.</i> |
| SL courses | Three | <i>Anywhere between three to six SL courses, depending on whether the student takes any courses at HL. Note that students must enroll in at least 5 courses in total.</i> |
| TOK | Yes | Not required |
| Ext. Essay | Yes | Not required |
| CAS | Yes | Yes (ISA graduation requirement) |

* In exceptional circumstances, and with the approval of the Assistant Head of School, in consultation with the relevant counsellor and DP Coordinator, students may opt to take four Higher Level and two Standard Level subjects.

IB Diploma Programme: Award of the IB Diploma

Source: IBO 2014. [General regulations: Diploma Programme](#). Article 13

13.1 All assessment components for each of the six subjects and the additional Diploma requirements must be completed in order to qualify for the award of the IB Diploma, except under the conditions stipulated in articles 18 and 19 of these regulations.

13.2 The IB Diploma will be awarded to a candidate provided all the following requirements have been met.

- A. CAS requirements have been met.
- B. The candidate's total points are 24 or more.
- C. There is no "N" awarded for theory of knowledge, the extended essay or for a contributing subject.
- D. There is no grade "E" awarded for theory of knowledge and/or the extended essay.
- E. There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level.
- F. There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (HL or SL).
- G. There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (HL or SL).
- H. The candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects (for candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count).
- I. The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL).
- J. The candidate has not received a penalty for academic misconduct from the Final Award Committee.

University admission

There are many pathways to university and it is important for students to research entrance requirements and meet regularly with school counsellors to ensure they are in an appropriate programme. Students should choose challenging courses in which they can perform to the best of their ability in order to ensure they are on track to meet their long-term goals.

The IB Diploma Programme or a strong IB Diploma Course Certificates pathway are among the very best credentials for university admittance in many countries. Colleges and universities normally prefer students who have earned more than the minimum graduation requirements for a high school diploma; this is especially the case for admission to competitive institutions.

Limits on course selection

ISA offers a wide range of courses for students in grades 11 and 12, but it is important to recognise that not every combination of courses can be available for all students. If two classes meet at the same time, students naturally have to choose which is their higher priority. Fortunately, we are able to accommodate our most popular, and most practical, combination of courses. To understand the various possible combinations of courses, refer to the *2020-2021 Grade 11 Course Silos* on the Grade 11 Course Selection form.

The **minimum class size** at ISA is eight students. Classes with projected enrolments of fewer than eight students may not be offered.

Tutored language classes

Language classes that do not reach the minimum enrolment are often offered as tutored language classes or through the Literature: school-supported self-taught (SSST) programme.

Some students participating in tutored language courses (including those in the SSST) qualify for a tuition rebate. The current policy is shown below. Please note that this policy is currently under review for the 2020-2021 school year. The updated policy will be shared with relevant families in August 2020.

IB Diploma Level Rebate for Second Language Tuition

IB Diploma Candidates (students in grades 11 and 12) who need to follow a tutored language as their second language in order to obtain the IB Diploma are given an 8% rebate on tuition fees for each year of the two-year Diploma program in order to help cover the costs involved in engaging a tutor.

The following conditions apply:

1. The rebate is for a second, not a third, language;
2. The rebate is not given if the candidate has a language offered by ISA in which s/he is competent enough to use toward the Diploma but does not wish to present that language;
3. The rebate is only granted to Diploma Candidates and not to Diploma Course candidates;
4. For students with no language strong enough to continue at the Diploma level, the school offers the option of taking an *ab initio* language as part of its curriculum. No rebate will be made for *ab initio* classes in languages other than those that have been formally approved as part of the school's curriculum;
5. The rebate does not apply to any grade levels other than the two-years in which a student is studying for the IB Diploma.

Relationship between tutor, family, and school: Our tutored languages coordinator works with families to find suitable tutors, however tutors are not ISA employees, and families themselves pay all tutoring fees. From time to time, ISA teachers do act as private tutors; for reasons of oversight and clarity, the school has specific policies in place related to these arrangements.

Tutored courses and reports: ISA awards course credit for all privately tutored DP language courses arranged and approved by the school. In light of the unique relationship between tutors, families, and the school, these courses are reported using a pass/fail system on ISA reports and transcripts. However, this unique relationship also permits tutors to report to students and families directly with additional information related to student learning and academic performance. In DP courses, we submit tutors' predicted grades to the IB and to universities using the IB's 1-7 scale.

Course changes

Course changes are possible until the October break of a student's grade 11 year. Level adjustments, i.e. changing SL/HL within the same course, must be approved by the end of semester one of the student's grade 11 year. Please note that any changes are only possible within the parameters of the course silo structure.

Programme continuation

Students' progress will be monitored throughout their time in grades 11-12. Should concerns arise about a student's progress, we will work closely with the family to find a pathway to success. Where there are ongoing concerns about a full Diploma candidate's performance in their grade 11 year, continuing as a full Diploma candidate will be at the discretion of the Head of Upper School.

Non-regular diploma

If the conditions of entry into an institution of higher education require a candidate to offer a choice of subjects different from that specified in the regulations for the Diploma Programme (one subject selected from each of groups 1 to 5, the sixth subject selected from either group 6 or from groups 1 to 5), the candidate may be allowed to make a reasonable substitution on presentation to the IB of the appropriate documentary evidence. This evidence, which may take the form of pages from a university prospectus, must be submitted in support of all requests.

'Students interested in a non regular IB Diploma can only apply if there is specific and documented evidence that there is no other alternative to their desired higher education pathway. Dutch Medical programs, for example, require three sciences. Students wishing to apply to such programs can only do so if they take three sciences in the diploma programme. They can apply to the IB for a non regular IB Diploma as there is a **specific and documented need** for such a request. Non regular diplomas are granted only if there is such an explicit need.

Students desiring specific minors or double majors at a college or university **do not qualify** for non regular IB Diploma authorization by IB standards because there are clear alternatives to higher education. There is no specific and documented evidence for such a diploma.

1. If there is sufficient **specific and documented evidence** to request a non regular IB Diploma, the student must formally apply to the IB through a written request to the Head of Upper School and the DP Coordinator explicitly referencing the documented need for such a diploma. Upon receipt of a formal written request, the DP Coordinator will then apply to the IB on the student's behalf.

A written request should be received no later than May 1st of 10th Grade. The IB reserves the right of approval. For this reason, it is essential to submit requests by the deadline stated above so that we can best advise candidates regarding course selections.

2. Diploma Candidates who obtain IB authorization for a non regular IB Diploma will automatically be granted an ISA graduation waiver for the subject(s) they are authorized not to study.
3. Course Candidates who wish to be exempted from an ISA graduation requirement may make a request for a non regular ISA Diploma. Such a request should contain sufficient and compelling justification for the exemption, such as the student's desired course of study or career goals after graduating from ISA. The written request should be received no later than May 1st of 10th Grade.

Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature

The language A courses are designed for students who have experience using the language under study in an academic context. ISA offers the following courses in several languages. For further information, continue reading on the following pages.

- Language A: language and literature - standard or higher level
- Language A: literature - standard or higher level
- Language A: literature (School-supported self-taught) - standard level

The primary purpose of the language and literature and literature courses is to encourage students to engage in significant ways with a wide range of texts, literary and non-literary. Students develop a deep understanding of the conventions of texts and how authors construct meaning. Powerful language and powerful literature has the capacity to transform. Students will encounter in both courses influential authors who seek to share their perceptions, insights, and “truths” about reality. Ultimately, both courses are about humanity, life, and the world.

The language and literature and literature courses are designed to be comparable in demands. Both courses are academically rigorous, requiring intellectual engagement and commitment. Each requires substantial reading, viewing, and writing.

School-supported self-taught (SSST) Literature is an option for those students whose home language is not offered as part of ISA’s English or Languages course offerings.

DP Language A: language and literature - standard or higher level

ISA offers the language A: language and literature course at both the standard and higher levels, in **Dutch** and **English**. When sufficient enrolment exists, the school considers expanding this offering to other languages (see *Limits on course selection: minimum class size*).

Language and literature encourages students to question the meaning generated by language and texts, which, it can be argued, is rarely straightforward and unambiguous. Helping students to focus closely on the language of the texts they study and to become aware of the role of each text's wider context in shaping its meaning is central to the course. The course aims to develop students' textual analysis skills and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary, can be seen as autonomous yet nested in cultures.

Language and literature fosters students' engagement with and understanding of global issues. The Individual Oral, the internal assessment for both standard and higher levels, requires students to analyse and evaluate how passages from literary and non-literary texts present a global issue of significance to the individual student's world view.

The syllabus outline for language and literature comprises both language works and literary texts. Over the two-year programme, students read a substantial number of non-literary works -- individual pieces and bodies of work -- chosen from a variety of sources, genres and media. The works that students analyse include: advertisement, blog, brochure, cartoon, documentary, film, journalism (news, feature, opinion), letter, review, speech, travel writing, and many more. Additionally, language and literature students read literary texts written originally in the language studied and in translation, representing a range of forms (novels, short stories, plays, poetry, memoir), time periods, and authorial backgrounds. The study of language works and literary texts produced in a language is central to an active engagement with language and culture and, by extension, to how people see and understand the world.

The study and composition of texts focused upon language and literature allow students to pursue questions relevant to their lives and world, such as the following:

- Do social media and digital platforms shape language, thought, and action?
- How are personal stories universal?
- How are ideas about gender challenged in texts?
- How can an understanding of the purposes and means of advertising and propaganda help audiences avoid being manipulated?
- In what ways can language and media be used to promote social change?

Assessment

Formal assessment in language and literature comprises non-literary and literary textual analysis through oral and written evaluations. The standard and higher level versions of the course are closely aligned: the assessment criteria are identical; two assessments are identical; at higher level one task is more challenging and there is an essay.

The number and nature of assessments in the language and literature course are the same as the literature course; the assessment criteria for the two courses are identical.

DP Language A: literature - standard or higher level

ISA offers the language A: literature course at both the standard and higher levels, in **English** (see *DP Language A: literature (school-supported self-taught) - standard level* for information studying the literature of a home language). When sufficient enrolment exists, the school considers expanding this offering to other languages (see *Limits on course selection: minimum class size*).

The literature course fosters students' engagement with and understanding of global issues. The Individual Oral, the internal assessment for both standard and higher levels, requires students to analyse and evaluate how passages from literary texts present a global issue of significance to the individual student's world view.

The syllabus outline for the literature course comprises literary texts. Over the two-year programme, students read a wide range of texts, both canonical and contemporary, including those in translation. These writings unearth the human condition in ways that challenge the status quo and invite students to question their sense of self and the contexts in which they exist. They represent a variety of forms (long and short fiction, memoir, plays, poetry), a range of time periods, and a constellation of writers who share their truths about what it means to be human. The approach to the study of these texts ask students to appreciate the art of authorial choices and cultivates intercultural understanding. The course aims to develop in students close reading and analytical skills, as well as the facility to speak and write about texts passionately, insightfully, and persuasively.

When appropriate, non-literary texts augment the examination of not only the global issues which emerge but also enhance a deeper understanding of the authors' messages and purposes.

The literature and language and literature courses are analogous in many ways; however, this course is best suited to students who enjoy reading literature.

Assessment

Formal assessment in the literature course is concentrated upon literary analysis across a range of academic forms as well as oral discussion, presentation, and textual analysis. The standard and higher level versions of the course are closely aligned: the assessment criteria are identical; two assessments are identical; at higher level one task is more challenging and there is an essay.

The number and nature of assessments in the literature course are the same as the language and literature course; the assessment criteria for the two courses are identical.

DP Language A: literature (school-supported self-taught) - standard level

To serve students whose home languages cannot be offered by ISA as a class due to minimum class size requirements, ISA offers the School-supported self-taught (SSST) option. For the most part, this course follows the Language A: literature syllabus with some differences in procedures and text selection requirements. Please note that, due to IB restrictions, SSST literature is offered at standard level only.

Students in this programme work with an ISA teacher once every four days on the mechanics and requirements of the DP literature course. The Upper School tutored languages coordinator helps families arrange tutored instruction in the literature of the student's language and culture.

Group 2: Language Acquisition

Language acquisition consists of two modern language courses—language B and language *ab initio*. These courses are designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken. This process allows the learner to go beyond the confines of the classroom, expanding their awareness of the world and fostering respect for cultural diversity. At the Diploma level, ISA offers the following Language B courses:

- Language B - standard or higher level
- French B *ab initio* - standard level

The following table should serve students as a guide when choosing an appropriate DP language course:

| MYP phase | ISA MYP class | DP pathways at ISA |
|----------------|-----------------------------------|--|
| Phase 1 | Beginners B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ab initio |
| Phase 2 | Intermediate B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ab initio (<i>in rare cases</i>) • Language B SL (<i>This is permitted by the IB, but it is not typical at ISA because of the demands of the Language B SL course.</i>) |
| Phase 3 | Intermediate B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language B SL |
| Phase 4 | Advanced B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language B SL • Language B HL |
| Phase 5 | Advanced B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language B SL • Language B HL • Language A: Language and Literature SL • Language A: Literature SL (<i>This is permitted by the IB, but it is not typical at ISA because of the demands of the Language A Literature course.</i>) |
| Phase 6 | Advanced B | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language A: Language and Literature SL |
| | Language A: Language & Literature | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language A: Language and Literature HL • Language A: Literature SL • Language A: Literature HL (<i>This is permitted by the IB, but it is not typical at ISA because of the demands of the Language A Literature course.</i>) |

From: [ISA Language Policy](#), last updated 04 April 2019

DP Language acquisition – standard or higher level

The language acquisition courses are additional language-learning courses designed for students with a degree of knowledge and experience in the target language. Both high-performing standard level (SL) students and students learning a language B at higher level (HL) should be able to follow university courses in other disciplines in the language B that is studied. ISA offers language acquisition courses-- at both levels-- in **Dutch, French, English** and **Spanish**.

The main focus of the course is on language acquisition and development of language skills. It will provide opportunities for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of an additional language. Language skills will be developed through the study and use of a range of written and spoken material. Such material will extend from everyday oral exchanges to literary texts, and will be related to the culture(s) concerned. The material will be chosen to enable students to develop mastery of language skills and intercultural understanding. It is not intended solely for the study of specific subject matter or content, but will enable the students to understand and use the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes. The course will also foster an awareness and appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures and the role of language in relation to other areas of knowledge.

All standard and higher level students are required to study 5 prescribed themes:

- **Identities:** Exploring the nature of the self and what it is to be human.
- **Experiences:** Exploring and telling the stories of the events, experiences and journeys that shape our lives.
- **Human ingenuity:** Exploring the ways in which human creativity and innovation affect our world.
- **Social organisation:** Exploring the ways in which groups of people organise themselves, or are organised, through common systems or interests.
- **Sharing the planet:** Exploring the challenges and opportunities faced by individuals and communities in the modern world.

These themes allow students to compare the target language and culture(s) to other languages and cultures with which they are familiar. The themes also provide opportunities for students to make connections to other disciplinary areas in the DP. Because they are inspired by the transdisciplinary themes of the PYP and the global contexts of the MYP, the DP language B course can enhance the continuity of the educational experience of long-standing IB students, while also being suitable for students who are new to the IB.

The use of literary works to develop students' receptive and productive skills is encouraged at all levels of language acquisition in the DP; however, in terms of formal requirements of the syllabus and assessment outline, **the study of two**

literary works originally written in the target language is a requirement at HL in language B. HL students are expected to understand fundamental elements of the literary works studied, such as themes, plot and characters. It must be emphasized that literary criticism is not an objective of the language B course; literary criticism lies within the remit of the DP studies in language and literature courses. In language acquisition courses, specifically language B HL, literature is intended as a stimulus for ideas to be explored, principally through oral assessment.

DP French *ab initio* - standard level only

The French *ab initio* course is for students with no prior experience of the language, or for those students with very limited previous exposure; by the IB's definition, this means that *ab initio* courses are mainly for students in phase 1 or beginning of phase 2 of the six phases for language acquisition.

The course is designed to develop students' receptive, productive and interactive communicative skills. Students learn to communicate in the language in familiar and unfamiliar contexts.

The **main aims** of the course are to:

- develop international-mindedness through the study of languages, cultures, and ideas of global significance;
- enable students to communicate in the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes;
- encourage, through the study of texts and through social interaction, an awareness and appreciation of a variety of perspectives of people from diverse cultures;
- develop students' awareness of the importance of language in relation to other areas of knowledge;
- provide students, through language learning and the process of inquiry, with opportunities for intellectual engagement and the development of critical-thinking skills;
- foster curiosity, creativity and a lifelong enjoyment of language learning.

Course Structure and Content

Five prescribed themes provide relevant contexts and opportunities for students to communicate about matters of personal, local or national, and global interest:

- identities
- experiences
- human ingenuity
- social organisation
- sharing the planet

Under each theme, the language *ab initio* course is organised into four prescribed topics:

| Theme | Prescribed topics |
|---------------------|---|
| Identities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal attributes • Personal relationships • Eating and drinking • Physical well-being |
| Experiences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daily routine • Leisure • Holidays • Festivals and celebrations |
| Human ingenuity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport • Entertainment • Media • Technology |
| Social organisation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood • Education • The workplace • Social issues |
| Sharing the planet | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Climate • Physical geography • The environment • Global issues |

Students will be assessed on their reading, writing, listening and speaking skills, using a wide range of oral, written and visual materials present in society.

Language B (tutored home language) - standard and higher level

Though ISA Upper School students have a wide range of options in the school's language B programme, from time to time a student's background or future aspirations warrant the delivery of a tutored language B course. Here again, ISA's tutored languages coordinator works with families to help arrange privately tutored classes delivered to small groups or on a one-on-one basis. Ideally, language tutors meet students during the regular school day; however, when this is not possible, the student may take her/his language lesson at another time, often after school.

Group 3: Individuals and societies

Individuals and societies embraces the way people interact with each other and the world around them, how societies have grown and how they differ. Studies of the past, local situations and of global perspectives foster an appreciation of change and continuity as well as of similarity and difference. To achieve this understanding, students are taught to consider theories, ideas and happenings from the points of view of different individuals, nations and cultures in the world. Although complete knowledge is impossible, students can search for understanding through a wide range of different aspects. Their search may inspire a lifelong interest in the promotion of international understanding.

Students evaluate the major theories, concepts and research findings of the respective disciplines and learn each discipline's methodology. An essential characteristic of the disciplines in group 3 is that their subject matter is contestable and that their study requires students to tolerate some uncertainty.

ISA offers the following group 3 courses:

- Economics, standard level/higher level
- Geography, standard level/higher level
- Global politics, standard level/higher level
- History, standard level/higher level
- Information technology in a global society (ITGS), standard level/higher level

DP Economics – standard or higher level

“The reality is that we are all economists. We all deal with scarcity as we make choices and calculate how to ration various items and resources that we consume, produce and utilize.” - Kurt Bills

The study of economics uses economic theories to examine scarcity. While the world’s population has unlimited needs and wants, there are limited resources to satisfy these. As a result, choices will have to be made. Economics therefore studies the ways in which choices are made:

- at the level of producers and consumers in individual markets (microeconomics)
- at the level of the government and the national economy (macroeconomics)
- at an international level (the global economy)

As a social science, economics uses scientific methodologies that include quantitative and qualitative elements. The DP economics course allows students to explore economic models and theories, and apply them using empirical data through the examination of the following six real-world issues:

1. How do consumers and producers make choices in trying to meet their economic objectives?
2. When are markets unable to satisfy important economic objectives - and does government intervention help?
3. Why does economic activity vary over time and why does this matter?
4. How do governments manage their economy and how effective are their policies?
5. Who are the winners and losers of the integration of the world’s economies?
6. Why is economic development uneven?

The course will focus on the above six real-world issues through nine key concepts (scarcity, choice, efficiency, equity, economic well-being, sustainability, change, interdependence and intervention). In this way, students develop the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that will encourage them to act responsibly as global citizens.

Given the rapidly changing world we live in, economic activity and its outcomes are constantly in flux. Therefore, students are encouraged, throughout the course to research current real-world issues. Through their own inquiry, it is expected that students will be able to appreciate both values and limitations of economic models in explaining real-world economic behaviour and outcomes.

The IB Diploma Programme economics course emphasises the economic theories of microeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting individuals, firms and markets, and the economic theories of macroeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting governments and countries as a whole. In the unit on

the global economy students gain a more international perspective and understand that countries are becoming increasingly interdependent.

The Diploma Programme economics course is for any student as the course requires no specific prior learning. However, students interested in pursuing further academic studies in the field should research the requirements of specific university programmes as these might require a minimum level of mathematics. Students who have less affinity with the use of linear equations and manipulation of percentages and index numbers may opt for standard level (SL) economics rather than higher level (HL) economics.

This course is divided into the following units:

1. Introduction to economics
2. Microeconomics
3. Macroeconomics
4. The global economy

Assessment in this course:

Standard Level

- Paper 1 - Extended response paper
- Paper 2 - Data response paper
- Internal assessment portfolio of 3 commentaries in which economic theory is applied to a current news extract

Higher Level

- Paper 1 - Extended response paper
- Paper 2 - Data response paper
- Paper 3 - Policy paper
- Internal assessment portfolio of 3 commentaries in which economic theory is applied to a current news extract

Weighting:

- Internal assessment HL: 20% and SL: 30%
- External assessment HL: 80% and SL: 70%

Higher and standard level distinctions in this course:

SL and HL students of economics are presented with a common syllabus, with an HL extension in some topics. The Market failure topics of asymmetric information, market power and the market's inability to achieve equity are the exclusive HL topics. The syllabus for both SL and HL students requires the development of similar skills and techniques including the ability to appropriately define, use and apply economic terms, the knowledge and understanding of relevant economic concepts and theories and the ability to analyse and synthesise real-world issues. Both SL and HL students develop quantitative skills and use diagrams in order to explain and analyse economic relationships. Only HL students sit the policy paper.

DP Geography – standard or higher level

Geography is a dynamic subject that is firmly grounded in the real world and focuses on the interactions between individuals, societies and physical processes in both time and space. It seeks to identify trends and patterns in these interactions. It also investigates the way in which people adapt and respond to change, and evaluates actual and possible management strategies associated with such change. The Diploma Programme geography course is focussed around four important concepts: processes, places, power and possibilities.

This class is for anyone who has an interest in and concern for the world around them and the issues facing the planet. Students who study geography learn about issues that affect them and the world on a daily basis.

This course might be appealing to you if you are interested in understanding:

- The places and communities in which we live and work
- Our natural environments and the pressures they face
- The interconnectedness of the world and our communities within it
- How and why the world is changing, globally and locally
- How our individual and societal actions contribute to those changes

Geography teaches numerous and varied skills: data collection, manipulation, presentation and analysis, essay writing and reading/annotating maps.

This course is divided into the following units

Part 1: Optional Themes (SL/HL) (Tentative; these may change)

- Urban environments
- The geography of food and health
- Leisure, sport and tourism (HL only)

Part 2: Geographic Perspectives - global change (SL/HL)

- Population distribution
- Global climate
- Global resource consumption and security

Part 3: HL extension— (HL only)

- Power, places and networks
- Human development and diversity
- Global risks and resilience

Assessment

Class assignments are varied: questions/notes from the textbook; practice past paper questions - short answer and essay; vocabulary quizzes. Summative assessments imitate real IB exams in difficulty and procedures.

Higher and standard level distinctions

In Part 2 standard level students study two optional themes; higher level students study three optional themes.

Higher level students also study the higher level extension (Part 3)—global interactions, and examine, evaluate and synthesise the prescribed concepts, which by their nature are complex, contestable, interlinked and require holistic treatment.

DP Global Politics – standard or higher level

Global politics is an exciting and engaging subject that draws on a variety of disciplines in the social sciences and humanities, reflecting the complex nature of many contemporary political issues. The study of global politics enables students to critically engage with a variety of perspectives and approaches to politics in order to comprehend the challenges of the changing world and become aware of their role in it as engaged global citizens.

Global politics explores fundamental political concepts such as power, equality, sustainability, and peace in a range of contexts. It allows students to develop an understanding of the local, national, international and global dimensions of political activity and processes, as well as to explore political issues affecting their own lives.

The course is suitable for those who have an interest in the issues affecting the world today. Students will need to have advanced presentation and academic writing skills.

Furthermore, the subject focuses on:

- understanding of key political concepts and contemporary political issues in a range of contexts;
- development of an understanding of the local, national, international and global dimensions of political activities;
- critical engagement with a variety of perspectives and approaches in global politics;
- appreciation of the complex and interconnected nature of many political issues, and the capacity to interpret competing and contestable claims regarding those issues.

This course is divided into the following units:

1. Core unit: Power, sovereignty, and international relations
2. Human rights
3. Development
4. Peace and conflict

Higher level content:

Students examine 4 options chosen from 6 global political challenges through case studies: environment, poverty, health, identity, borders, and security.

Assessment

Engagement activity (internal assessment): A research report on a political issue of personal interest which is based on engagement outside the classroom.

Paper 1 - Exam - students answer questions based on source material related to any of the four core units.

Paper 2 - Exam - students answer essay style questions:

- Higher level - 3 questions out of 8 possible questions related to the four core units.
- Standard level - 2 questions out of 8 possible questions related to the four core units.

Higher level presentations (internal assessment): Research and present for 10 minutes on a political issue through a case-study approach related to two of the six global political challenges.

DP History – standard or higher level

The IB history course is a comparative and multi-perspective study of the past. Studying history develops a deeper understanding of the nature of humans and of the world today. This course emphasises developing historical skills as well as gaining factual knowledge, which leads to a deepened understanding of the past. History is interpretive, allowing opportunities for engagement with multiple perspectives. The course is focused around such key concepts such as change, causation and significance.

The aims of the course are to:

1. develop an understanding of, and continuing interest in the past;
2. encourage students to engage with multiple perspectives and to appreciate the complex nature of historical concepts, issues, events and developments;
3. promote international-mindedness through the study of history from more than one region of the world;
4. develop an understanding of history as a discipline and to develop historical consciousness including a sense of chronology and context, and an understanding of different historical perspectives;
5. develop key historical skills, including engaging effectively with sources;
6. increase students' understanding of themselves and of contemporary society by encouraging reflection on the past.

This course is divided into the following units:

Compulsory (SL/HL):

- Authoritarian states
- Causes and effects of 20th-century wars
- Rights and Protest

Compulsory (HL only):

- HL regional extension: History of Europe

Assessment

Questions from textbooks and reading packets, practice past-paper questions, essays, tests, and individual and pair presentations.

- Paper 1: Source-analysis paper based on 5 historical documents
- Paper 2: Two essays
- Paper 3: Three essays
- Internal assessment paper (written historical investigation): 2,200 words

Higher and standard level distinctions

Because the skills and activity of studying history are common to both standard and higher level students, all students are presented with a syllabus that consists of the compulsory topics of Authoritarian States, Causes and Effects of 20th-Century

Wars, and Rights and Protest. The regions studied for the shared syllabus include historical events from Europe, Latin America, Africa, Asia, and North America. This knowledge is assessed in Papers 1 and 2.

The Higher Level extension includes additional topics that are specific to Europe. This extended knowledge is assessed in paper 3, providing further depth.

DP Information technology in a global society – standard or higher level

The IB Diploma Programme information technology in a global society (ITGS) course is the study and evaluation of the impacts of information technology (IT) on individuals and society. It explores the advantages and disadvantages of the access and use of digitised information at the local and global level. ITGS provides a framework for the student to make informed judgements and decisions about the use of IT within social contexts.

This course is suitable for any student who is interested in the changing world of technology and the impacts it has on our society. A familiarity with IT terminology, concepts and tools would be an advantage.

The IT skills project makes this a unique course. Students must use their IT skills and the design cycle to create a bespoke IT solution for a client such as a website, a video, a database, an app, an iBook or a desktop publishing (DTP) solution.

The aims of the ITGS course are to:

- enable students to evaluate social and ethical considerations arising from the widespread use of IT by individuals, families, communities, organisations and societies at the local and global level;
- develop students' understanding of the capabilities of current and emerging IT systems and to evaluate their impact on a range of stakeholders;
- enable students to apply their knowledge of existing IT systems to various scenarios and to make informed judgements about the effects;
- encourage students to use their knowledge of IT systems and practical IT skills to justify IT solutions for a specified client or end-user;
- discuss the social and ethical implications of IT policies and developments;
- evaluate, formulate and justify possible strategic courses of action related to the annually issued case study.

ITGS looks at the impacts of technology on stakeholders in the following units:

- 1.1 Reliability and integrity
- 1.2 Security
- 1.3 Privacy and anonymity
- 1.4 Intellectual property
- 1.5 Authenticity
- 1.6 The digital divide and equality of access
- 1.7 Surveillance
- 1.8 Globalisation and cultural diversity
- 1.9 Policies
- 1.10 Standards and protocols
- 1.11 People and machines
- 1.12 Digital citizenship

Higher and standard level distinctions

Extra components in higher level:

- Paper 3: Case study
- Robotics, expert systems, artificial intelligence and IT in organisations

Group 4: Sciences

By studying science subjects students should become aware of how scientists work and communicate with each other. While the scientific method may take on a wide variety of forms, it is the emphasis on a practical approach through experimental work that characterises the subject. Teachers provide students with opportunities to develop manipulative skills, design investigations, collect data, analyse results and evaluate and communicate their findings.

Through the overarching theme of the nature of science, the aims of the DP sciences courses are to enable students to:

1. appreciate scientific study and creativity within a global context through stimulating and challenging opportunities;
2. acquire, apply and use a body of knowledge, methods and techniques that characterise science and technology;
3. develop an ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesise scientific information;
4. develop a critical awareness of the need for, and the value of, effective collaboration and communication during scientific activities;
5. develop experimental and investigative scientific skills including the use of current technologies;
6. develop and apply 21st century communication skills in the study of science;
7. become critically aware, as global citizens, of the ethical implications of using science and technology;
8. develop an appreciation of the possibilities and limitations of science and technology;
9. develop an understanding of the relationships between scientific disciplines and their influence on other areas of knowledge.

The International School of Amsterdam offers the following Group 4 (Sciences) courses for the IB Diploma:

| | |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Biology, standard or higher level | Chemistry, standard or higher level |
| Nature of science, standard level | Physics, standard or higher level |

Mathematical and language skills

Mathematical and language competence are requirements for all these courses. In particular:

- **Biology:** Use of statistics, spreadsheets and many types of graphs. Strong literacy skills as there is a great deal of new vocabulary and students are expected to describe complex processes very specifically.
- **Chemistry:** Confidence with algebraic skills, scientific notation, logarithms and with ratios and proportions. Ability to memorise and reproduce precise explanations.

- **Nature of science:** Good mathematical and language ability.
- **Physics:** Confidence with algebraic skills and line graphs. The mathematics course applications and interpretations SL is not suitable for physics higher level.

Assessment model

It is the intention of this course that students are able to fulfil the following assessment objectives:

1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
 - facts, concepts, and terminology
 - methodologies and techniques
 - communicating scientific information
2. Apply:
 - facts, concepts, and terminology
 - methodologies and techniques
 - methods of communicating scientific information
3. Formulate, analyse and evaluate:
 - hypotheses, research questions and predictions
 - methodologies and techniques
 - primary and secondary data
 - scientific explanations.
4. Demonstrate the appropriate research, experimental, and personal skills necessary to carry out insightful and ethical investigations.

Final assessment overview

In the three specialist science courses, students will be assessed through three exam papers and a personal investigation. The personal investigation is a scientific investigation planned, conducted and evaluated by the student and is assessed by their teacher. This occurs during 10 hours of class time and homework time and counts for 20% of the final grade. It is generally carried out at the end of grade 11 or the beginning of grade 12. Students studying more than one science will undertake a separate personal investigation for each discipline.

In May of their final year, students will write three exam papers which will count for 80% of the final grade. The exam papers consist of multiple choice, knowledge recall and analysis type questions.

Nature of science assessment is similar but consists of two final exam papers and an individual investigation that takes 15 hours and counts for 30% of the final grade.

The group 4 project

The group 4 project is a collaborative activity where students from different group 4 subjects, within or between schools, work together. It allows for concepts and perceptions from across disciplines to be shared while appreciating the environmental, social and ethical implications of science and technology. It can be practically or theoretically based and aims to develop an understanding of the relationships between scientific disciplines and their influence on other areas of knowledge. The emphasis is on interdisciplinary cooperation and the scientific processes. At ISA, the group 4 project is carried out over two school days towards the end of grade 11, with all students involved.

DP Biology - standard or higher level**Course description and aims**

Biology is the study of life. The vast diversity of species makes biology both an endless source of fascination and a considerable challenge. Biologists attempt to understand the living world at all levels from the micro to the macro using many different approaches and techniques. Biology is still a young science and great progress is expected in the 21st century. This progress is important at a time of growing pressure on the human population and the environment.

Curriculum model overview

All students study the following topics:

- Cell biology
- Molecular biology
- Genetics
- Ecology
- Evolution and biodiversity
- Human physiology

Higher level students also study these topics:

- Nucleic acids
- Metabolism, cell respiration and photosynthesis
- Plant biology
- Genetics and evolution
- Animal physiology

In addition, one topic from the following list is taught:

- Neurobiology and behaviour
- Biotechnology and bioinformatics
- Ecology and conservation
- Human physiology

DP Chemistry- standard or higher level

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. Chemistry is often a prerequisite for many other courses in higher education, such as medicine, biological science, engineering and environmental science.

Both theory and practical work should be undertaken by all students as they complement one another naturally, both in school and in the wider scientific community. 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.

Curriculum model overview

All students study the following topics:

- Stoichiometric relationships
- Atomic structure
- Periodicity
- Chemical bonding and structure
- Energetics/thermochemistry
- Chemical kinetics
- Equilibrium
- Acids and bases
- Redox processes
- Organic chemistry
- Measurement and data processing

In addition, one topic from the following list is taught:

- Materials
- Biochemistry
- Energy
- Medicinal chemistry

Higher level students also study these topics with greater depth and sophistication:

- Atomic structure
- The periodic table—the transition metals
- Chemical bonding and structure
- Energetics/thermochemistry
- Chemical kinetics

- Equilibrium
- Acids and bases
- Redox processes
- Organic chemistry
- Measurement and analysis

DP Nature of Science - standard level

The DP nature of science course is a rigorous pre-university course of study that meets the needs of able secondary school students **not** intending to continue scientific study in further education.

This two-year course is offered at standard level only and may not be taken in conjunction with another Group 4 subject. This is a pilot (trial) course and is only offered at 20 schools worldwide. As a course in development, we are working closely with the International Baccalaureate to ensure that the course incorporates the latest developments in science education and the highest academic standards.

The aim of the course is to help students develop an advanced understanding of the methods of science in helping to understand the world around them. It seeks to explain how scientific knowledge develops through human endeavour and to encourage scientific literacy in non-scientists. The major understandings of the course are taught through the following contexts:

Part A: Concepts

- Energy and particles

Part B: The quest for understanding

- The universe
- Nature of our planet
- Evolution

Part C: The impact of science

- Energy and physical resources
- Transport
- Communications
- Food security
- Medicine

Part D: Challenges and the future

- Man's impact on the environment/planet

Requirements: There are no minimum requirements for this course. It is designed to best suit students with broad interests across the traditional scientific disciplines and with generally strong mathematical and linguistic ability.

The following link provides a useful online resource has been developed by Berkeley, University of California: http://undsci.berkeley.edu/article/intro_01

Students considering taking this course may well wish to examine it before making their final decision.

DP Physics - standard or higher level

Physics is the most fundamental of the experimental sciences, as it seeks to explain the universe itself, from the very smallest particles to the vast distances between galaxies. Despite the exciting and extraordinary development of ideas throughout the history of physics, observations remain essential to the very core of the subject. Models are developed to try to understand observations, and these themselves can become theories that attempt to explain the observations.

Besides helping us better understand the natural world, physics gives us the ability to alter our environments. This raises the issue of the impact of physics on society, the moral and ethical dilemmas, and the social, economic and environmental implications of the work of physicists.

Curriculum model overview

All students study the following topics:

- Measurements and uncertainties
- Mechanics
- Thermal physics
- Waves
- Electricity and magnetism
- Circular motion and gravitation
- Atomic, nuclear and particle physics
- Energy production

In addition, one topic from the following list is taught:

- Relativity
- Engineering physics
- Imaging
- Astrophysics

Higher level students also study these topics:

- Wave phenomena
- Fields
- Electromagnetic induction
- Quantum and nuclear physics

Group 5: Mathematics

The DP mathematics courses have been designed around the fact that individual students have different needs, interests and abilities. Accordingly, mathematics will be offered in two different courses, each offered at two different levels:

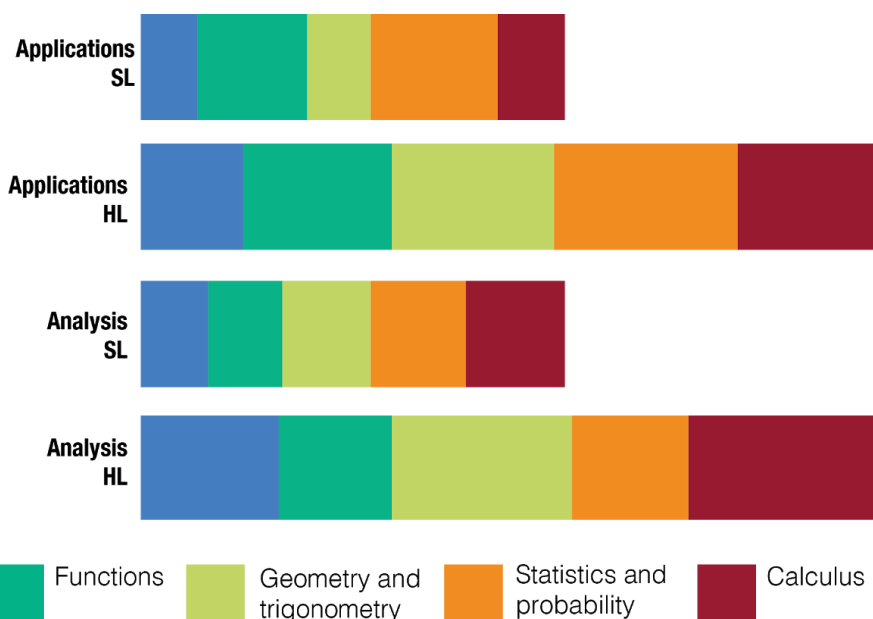
- Mathematics: Analysis and approaches (Higher Level and Standard Level)
- Mathematics: Applications and interpretations (Higher Level and Standard Level)

Each course is designed to meet the needs of a particular group of students, therefore, great care should be taken to select the course that is most appropriate for each individual student. In making this selection, students are advised to take into account the following types of factors:

- The recommendation from their grade 10 teachers;
- Their own abilities in mathematics and the type of mathematics in which they can be successful;
- Their own interest in mathematics, and those particular areas of the subject that may hold the most interest for them;
- Their other choices of subjects within the framework of the Diploma Programme;
- Their academic plans, in particular the subjects they wish to study in the future;
- Their choice of career.

Content: Both courses, Mathematics analysis and approaches, and Mathematics applications and interpretation, have common features, including sharing some of the same content, which is organized around the following topics, with standard and higher level courses pursuing these at different levels of depth (see graph).

- Number and algebra
- Functions
- Geometry and trigonometry
- Statistics and probability
- Calculus



DP Mathematics: analysis and approaches – standard or higher level

Mathematics: analysis and approaches at SL and HL is appropriate for students who enjoy developing their mathematics to become fluent in the construction of mathematical arguments and to develop strong skills in mathematical thinking. They will also be fascinated by exploring real and abstract applications of these ideas, with and without the use of technology. Students who take Mathematics: analysis and approaches will be those who enjoy the thrill of mathematical problem solving and generalisation. Mathematics: analysis and approaches reflects the emphasis on calculus and on algebraic, graphical and numerical approaches.

The **higher level** course caters to students with a strong background in mathematics who are competent in a range of analytical and technical skills. The majority of these students will be expecting to include mathematics as a major component of their university studies, either as a subject in its own right or within courses such as physical sciences, engineering, mathematics and some economics courses. This course is a demanding one, requiring students to study a broad range of mathematical topics through a number of different approaches and to varying degrees of depth. ISA therefore recommends that this course is best suited to those students who have taken MYP mathematics extended (or equivalent) in grade 10 and achieved an overall grade of at least a 5, but preferably a 6 or 7.

This **standard level** course caters to students who already possess good knowledge of basic mathematical concepts, and who are equipped with the skills needed to apply mathematical techniques correctly. The majority of these students will expect to need a sound mathematical background as they prepare for future studies in subjects such as biology, chemistry, economics, psychology and business administration. Although this course does not have the depth found in the higher level course, it is still a challenging course and would be suitable for students who have followed the MYP mathematics extended (or equivalent) in grade 10, or students who have achieved at least a grade 5, but preferably a grade 6 or 7, in the MYP mathematics grade 10 course.

Assessment: At the end of the two-year course external assessment will consist of:

- Paper 1: non-calculator, short and extended response questions
- Paper 2: calculator short and extended response questions
- Paper 3: (higher level only), two extended problem solving questions
- Mathematical exploration: an internally assessed report, which allows students: the opportunity for developing independence in their mathematical learning without the time constraints of a written examination.

DP Mathematics: applications and interpretations – standard or higher level

Mathematics: applications and interpretation SL and HL are appropriate for students who are interested in developing their mathematics for describing our world and solving practical problems. They will also be interested in harnessing the power of technology alongside exploring mathematical models. Students who take Mathematics: applications and interpretation will be those who enjoy mathematics best when seen in a practical context. Mathematics: applications and interpretation emphasises the applied nature of the subject, and also that interpretation of results in context is an important element of the subject.

The **higher level course** is equally as demanding as the Analysis and Applications higher level class, and also requires students to have a strong background in mathematics. However, since the focus is on the application of mathematics, this class places more emphasis on statistics and probability as well as using mathematics to model real-world phenomena. This subject is aimed at students who will go on to study subjects such as social sciences, natural sciences, medicine, statistics, business, some economics courses, psychology, and design, for example. Given the demanding nature of this course, it is recommended for students who have taken MYP mathematics extended (or equivalent) in grade 10 and achieved an overall grade of at least a 5, but preferably a 6 or 7.

The **standard level** course caters to students with varied backgrounds and abilities. More specifically, it is designed to build confidence and encourage an appreciation of mathematics in students who do not anticipate a need for mathematics in their future studies. It is therefore recommended that students should be aware of the general requirements of their university choices before making the decision to choose Applications and interpretations standard level.

Assessment: At the end of the two-year course external assessment will consist of:

- Paper 1: short response questions, graphical display calculator required
- Paper 2: longer extended response questions, graphical display calculator required
- Paper 3: (higher level only), two extended problem solving questions
- Mathematical exploration: an internally assessed report, which allows students: the opportunity for developing independence in their mathematical learning without the time constraints of a written examination.

Group 6: The Arts

Learning through the arts requires a high level of cognitive activity that is both intellectual and emotional. For students to communicate artistically they must locate themselves within a cultural context, or contexts, from which to discover and develop appropriate techniques.

Through the arts people acquire understandings, which are unique in human development. Study of the arts allows students to discover ways in which to interpret and comment critically on the human condition. Furthermore, the inspiration engendered by artistic activity can become a driving force in other studies and throughout life. Increasingly, universities and employers are appreciating the kind of creativity that is engendered in students who have studied a discipline in the arts.

Engagement in the arts promotes a sense of identity and makes a unique contribution to the development of each student. Study of the arts provides students with the opportunity to develop a critical and intensely personal view of themselves in relation to the world.

ISA offers the following group 6 courses:

- Film, standard level/higher level
- Music, standard level/higher level
- Theatre, standard level/higher level
- Visual arts, standard level/higher level

DP Film – standard or higher level

The IB Diploma Programme film course explores film as an art form, focusing on cinema history, film as a text, and film production. The two-year programme aims to develop students' skills so that they become adept in both interpreting as well as making films. The course engenders in students a deep appreciation for, and understanding of, the cinematic arts, and helps provide students with a much richer experience when watching or producing films.

Course Overview

There are four components of the course:

- **Part 1: Textual analysis:** Students choose an extract from a prescribed film and craft a written commentary analysing the myriad cinematic and sociocultural aspects of scene (1,750 words).
- **Part 2: Comparative film study:** Students research an aspect of film and conduct a recorded multimedia comparison of two films (10 minutes).
- **Part 3: Production portfolio:** Students undertake a variety of filmmaking exercises in three film production roles, with at least one completed film included in the portfolio (9 minutes maximum; 3 minutes maximum per film production role, including one completed film).
- **Part 4: Collaborative film project (HL only):** In the collaborative film project, students work collaboratively in a core production team to plan and create an original completed film. Students submit: a project report (2,000 words maximum); a completed film (7 minutes maximum).

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need prior knowledge of the subject to take the course?

No. If you love films and want to explore their art and creation in a substantive way, this course will allow you to develop your understanding, regardless of prior experience.

I'm interested in studying film when I graduate. Will this class prepare me for film school?

If you would like to pursue film at university, the class will enable you to develop your portfolio and build your academic understanding of the medium.

Do I need my own film equipment to complete the production assignments?

You are welcome to use any cameras you might have, but the class has equipment for your use.

DP Music - standard or higher level

Making music is one of the important activities that makes us human. The DP music course invites exciting, self-guided exploration and in-depth study. All students will have the chance to engage in the world of music as performers, creators and researchers of music. If you are passionate about music and committed to self-improvement, then DP music is for you.

Curriculum model overview

The music course represents an integrated and holistic way of teaching and learning music. The framework of the class is developed around four Areas of Inquiry:

- Music for sociocultural and political expression
- Music for listening and performance
- Music for dramatic impact, movement and entertainment
- Music technology in the electronic and digital age.

Assessment model

Each of these assessments is linked directly to the three musical processes and requires that students show evidence of engagement as performers, creators and researchers of music.

1. **Exploring music in context** - students will develop a portfolio that includes research about music from diverse times and places, as well as examples of original creation and performance;
2. **Experimenting with music** - students will create and perform examples of music from diverse context with research supporting their process choices;
3. **Presenting music** - students will submit a collection of works demonstrating engagement with diverse musical material from different areas of inquiry;
4. **Contemporary music making (HL only)** - Students submit a continuous multimedia presentation documenting a real-life project.

Please note that starting in May, 2022, there is no longer a written exam component to the music course. All assessments will be completed as part of the course work.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I need to have taken music lessons before starting DP music?

Previous study of music is helpful, but not required for standard level. For higher level, students are recommended to have successfully completed either the MYP music course or to have studied music with a private instructor. The DP music course is highly rigorous and requires a love of music, an excitement for learning by taking risks and a dedication to continued improvement.

Do I need to read music in order to take this course?

Some level of familiarity with how music is notated is helpful in this course, but not a requirement. As part of the course, students will be challenged to improve their skills as readers/writers of music.

Is DP music a valuable class even if I am not going to study music at the university level?

Yes! Most students of DP music do not study music at the university level; although, many do continue to create and perform music, and some have even found interesting ways of blending their passions for music with whatever subjects they have chosen to study. In any case, you will have an opportunity to develop a part of yourself that is unique and valuable no matter what you choose to do later in life.

DP Theatre – standard or higher level

Theatre is a practical subject that encourages discovery through experimentation, risk-taking and the presentation of ideas. The IB DP theatre course is multifaceted and gives students the opportunity to actively engage in theatre as creators, designers, directors and performers. It emphasises working both individually and collaboratively as part of an ensemble. Students learn to apply research and theory to inform and to contextualise their work.

Through researching, creating, preparing, presenting and critically reflecting on theatre, they gain a richer understanding of themselves, their community and the world. Students experience the course from contrasting artistic and cultural perspectives. They learn about theatre from around the world, the importance of making theatre with integrity, and the impact that theatre can have on the world. It enables them to discover and engage with different forms of theatre across time, place and culture, promoting an appreciation of the diversity of theatre.

Curriculum model overview

- **Theatre in context:** Examining the theoretical, cultural, and personal that inform theatre-making, and their influences on all performance and production elements that arise from these contexts;
- **Theatre processes:** Exploration of the skills, techniques, and processes involved in theatre-making. Students reflect on creative processes, as well as skill-acquisition in their own work and the work of others;
- **Presenting theatre:** This involves the staging and presentation of live theatre, as well as the presentation of ideas and discoveries made through presentation. These are both presented live and in portfolio formats.

Assessment model

There are 3 tasks at standard level (SL) and 4 at higher level (HL), all of which are done during the course. Three of four assessments are video-recorded for submission to the IB.

- **Solo theatre piece** (HL only): Create and present a solo theatre piece based on an aspect(s) of theatre theory;
- **Director's notebook:** Develop ideas regarding how a play text could be staged for an audience;
- **Research presentation:** Deliver an individual presentation that outlines and physically demonstrates research into a convention of a theatre tradition;
- **Collaborative project:** Collaboratively create and present an original piece of theatre for and to a specific targeted audience.

FAQ

Do I need to do the after-school production to be in the course? No, you do not. However, you can always learn more when participating in the process and performance of theatre.

Do I sit the May exams for DP Theatre? No, all assessments are done within the two-year course and are finished by mid-April of the second year of the programme.

Is this an easy DP course? No, DP theatre is no easier than any other DP course. There is an equal divide between practical work and written work that is either research or reflection-based.

Will diversifying my academic CV help me with university application? Yes. Many universities seek students with exposure to multiple disciplines and skill sets. The arts are an important area of knowledge with many applications.

Do I need previous theatre experience to enrol in this course? No. You do not need prior theatre experience. However, if you are considering HL, you should probably have earned at least a 4 in the 10 MYP drama.

What will I be able to take away from this course?

After two years of investigating the purpose and history of theatre and exploring your own connection to creating theatre, you will have garnered a better understanding of the nature of theatre and the role it plays within the perception of the world in which you live. Also, you will have been given the opportunity to delve into who you are as an artist, which will serve you well for whatever profession you want to go into.

DP Visual arts – standard or higher level

The visual arts are an integral part of everyday life, permeating all levels of human creativity, expression, communication and understanding. They range from traditional forms embedded in local and wider communities, societies and cultures, to the varied and divergent practices associated with new, emerging and contemporary forms of visual language. They may have socio-political impact as well as ritual, spiritual, decorative and functional value; they can be persuasive and subversive in some instances, enlightening and uplifting in others.

We celebrate the visual arts not only in the way we create images and objects, but also in the way we appreciate, enjoy, respect and respond to the practices of art-making by others from around the world. Theories and practices in visual arts are dynamic and ever-changing, and connect many areas of knowledge and human experience through individual and collaborative exploration, creative production and critical interpretation.

Curriculum model overview

- Visual arts methods – Artists and why they make art
- Visual arts in context – Ways of making art
- Communicating visual arts – Ways of presenting art

Assessment model

There are 3 assessments in DP visual arts:

- Part 1: **Comparative study** – critical and contextual written investigation
- Part 2: **Process portfolio** – exploration of visual arts processes
- Part 3: **Exhibition** –thematic curation of final artworks (internal assessment)

The DP visual arts course at both standard and higher level requires no previous experience. Students' individual abilities to be creative and imaginative and to communicate in artistic form will be developed and extended through the theoretical and practical content of the visual arts course. Students who take visual arts should be independent, self-motivated, risk taking and generally have a love of the visual arts.

Arts graduates are increasing across all academic areas at higher education level because the students develop creativity and problem solving skills that are applicable to all areas. The transferable skills are vast and increasingly recognized across industry as desirable commodities.

The course is completed by the beginning of April, therefore, there is no requirement to sit for exams in May.

IB Diploma Core: Theory of knowledge

The theory of knowledge (TOK) programme is central to the educational philosophy of the International Baccalaureate. It challenges students to reflect critically on the role that knowledge plays in a global society and encourages students to become aware of the complexity of knowledge and of themselves as critical thinkers. Most importantly, it encourages students to recognize the need to act responsibly in an increasingly interconnected world.

TOK as a course essentially examines how do we know what we claim to know is actually reliable? What constitutes good grounds for claiming something to be knowledge? It does this by encouraging students to analyse knowledge claims and explore knowledge questions in a variety of knowledge contexts.

A knowledge claim is the assertion that “I/we know X” or “I/we know how to Y”, or a statement about knowledge; a knowledge question is an open question about knowledge. A distinction between shared knowledge and personal knowledge is made throughout the entire TOK course.

Engaging students in a critical examination of knowledge, TOK fosters an appreciation of the quest for knowledge, in particular its importance, its complexities, and its human implications. Full IB Diploma Programme candidates are required to take this course. Course candidates may opt for a certificate if they so desire.

| TOK Curriculum Structure | |
|---|---|
| Core theme: Knowledge and the Knower | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Me as a knower and a thinker • What shapes my perspective? • Where do our values come from? • How can we navigate the world? • How can we tell when we are being manipulated? |
| Optional Themes <i>(We will select two)</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and technology • Knowledge and language • Knowledge and indigenous societies • Knowledge and politics • Knowledge and religion |

Areas of Knowledge:

Knowledge contexts

- History
- The Human Sciences
- The Natural Sciences
- Mathematics
- The Arts

TOK Assessment Outline:

The assessment model in theory of knowledge (TOK) comprises two components:

- **External assessment :** TOK Essay on a Prescribed Title (1200-1600 words)
- **Internal assessment:** TOK Exhibition of Critical thinking based on a TOK Knowledge prompt (Three knowledge artifacts and 950-word commentary)

Extended essay

The extended essay (EE) is an independent piece of formal academic writing of up to 4,000 words. Students are expected to spend approximately 40 hours of research and writing time on this essay. Students writing their EE are assisted in their work by an academic advisor who must be a member of ISA's faculty.

It is important to note that the EE is an extended and independent research project. It is thus very important that students be self-motivated whilst working on this project. Students begin working on the EE in the second semester of grade 11 and finish in the first quarter of the first semester in grade 12.

The EE is designed to offer diploma candidates the opportunity to investigate a topic of their choice in a subject of their interest. In working on the EE, students are responsible for researching and developing a "major piece of formally presented, structured writing, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject chosen". (EE Guide 2013)

The EE helps students develop independent approaches to learning essential to their further university studies. In working on their EE, students develop the ability to initiate, plan, and persevere on an extended research project. They fine-tune their abilities to inquire and manage information. They further develop their ability to understand and apply key concepts in a chosen subject of interest. They explore ways to communicate new understanding in a formal manner. Finally, they refine their social skills and learn to work with an academic mentor.

Diploma candidates are required to submit an EE for their full diploma. Course candidates may elect to present an EE for certification.

Creativity, activity, service

Creativity, activity, service (CAS) is one of the central elements of the IB Diploma Programme. The aim of CAS is to encourage the development of new skills on many levels: for example, creative skills, physical skills and social skills. It should inspire a sense of responsibility towards all members of the community and the development of attitudes and traits that will be respected by others, such as determination and commitment, initiative and empathy. Although there are three elements to CAS, it is important not to consider them as mutually exclusive: CAS is about the education of the whole person and the three elements are interwoven.

- The International School of Amsterdam stipulates as part of its graduation requirement that all students involve themselves in the CAS programme;
- Full IB Diploma candidates, in addition to completing the six academic subjects, the theory of knowledge course and the Extended Essay, are required by the International Baccalaureate to participate in the CAS programme and meet the learning outcomes of CAS.

CAS is an experiential learning programme involving students in new roles where they learn by doing real-life tasks and reflecting on these experiences over the course of at least 18 months in grades 11 and 12. Students should have a varied, balanced programme of regular, ongoing activities.

Creativity: *arts, and other experiences that involve creative thinking*

This aspect of CAS is interpreted as imaginatively as possible. This could involve doing dance, theatre, music and art. Where possible, students should be involved in group activities, however, individual commitment to learning an art form is permitted as long as the requirements for CAS are followed i.e. goals are set and the student reflects on his or her progress. It is important for students to have a tangible outcome for their creative involvement.

Activity: *physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle*

This aspect of CAS can include participation in expeditions, individual and team sports, and physical activities outside the curriculum. Where possible, students should be involved in group activities, however, individual commitment is permitted as long the requirements for CAS are followed i.e. goals are set and the student reflects on his or her progress.

Service: *an unpaid and voluntary exchange that has learning benefit for the student*

Service involves interaction and building links with individuals or groups in the community. The community may be the school, local, national or international groups. Service activities should not only involve doing things **for** others but **with** others, developing a real commitment with them. The relationship should show respect for the dignity and self-respect of others.

Students are required to have a CAS project. This is a CAS experience where you must show you work towards achieving at least 3 Learning Objectives (Initiative & Planning, Collaborative Skills and Strength & Growth). Your project has to be longer than one month. Although it can have one strand (Creativity, Activity or Service), preferably you will have at least two of these.

Students are also required to do service with an international focus (e.g. WaterAid, Habitat for Humanity, Tanzania Girls programme) and face-to-face service within the local community outside of ISA (e.g. Soup Kitchen, Serve the City, work in a retirement home, reading with the disabled).

Additional ISA offerings

Physical education

In physical education, students have the opportunity to invent, create, transform and improve skills through a range of physical activities. Students are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility for their own well-being and for their physical and social environment.

The nature of physical and health education helps students to become aware of health issues and prepares them for a physically, emotionally and socially healthy life. Physical and health education leads to a better understanding of the relationship between individuals, community, climate, equipment and surfaces and enables students to make well-informed decisions.

At ISA, physical education is a required subject for all Upper School students. With this in mind, the programme is designed to give all students the opportunity to get in touch with many activities from a wide range of both individual and team-oriented sports. Students choose their group based on interest and friendship. The students also take some responsibility for the activities they want to do and for partly delivering the programme. The students are guided in creating, delivering and executing this programme. A pass/fail grade, based on participation and effort, is given for reporting purposes.

There are two outdoor blocks (early Fall and Spring) where students do activities like football, softball, frisbee, hockey, track and field, boot camp and some fun, non-mainstream activities.

There are two indoor blocks (late Fall and Winter) where students do activities like volleyball, basketball, badminton and some fun, non-mainstream sport activities. The students can do rock climbing and bouldering, dance, yoga and create their own work out in ISA's fitness room.

Course aims

The goal of the programme is to encourage and enable students to:

- develop individual motor skills, necessary to participate in a wide variety of physical activities;
- develop an appreciation and understanding of the value of physical education and its relationship to a healthy, balanced lifestyle;
- develop the motivation to participate fully in all aspects of physical education where each student is challenged to work towards their limits;
- work on a level suited to their individual abilities;
- develop effective communication strategies, verbal and non-verbal;

- develop the skills and understanding necessary to participate successfully in a variety of physical activities, for example, learning, practicing, refining, adapting, thinking, interacting;
- develop an understanding of international perspectives on physical activity, sport and health education;
- develop a lifelong interest in and enjoyment of physical activities as a participant showing personal engagement, initiative, enthusiasm and commitment.

Learning support

The Upper School learning support programme partners with students, faculty and parents to support those who have identified learning needs which extend beyond a typical classroom setting.

Learning support teachers introduce and reinforce strategies to assist students in achieving their potential. Such strategies may address study skills, efficient time management, systems of organisation, differentiated content review and self-advocacy skills. With faculty, learning support teachers consult and collaborate, share interventions and scaffold curriculum.

An Individual Learning Plan (ILP) is developed for each student with specific learning needs to outline the child's strengths and challenges, effective teaching strategies and accommodations. Interventions may be provided to students through a variety of methods including learning support class, monitoring of academic needs and progress, support within classrooms and overseeing accommodations. Students with diagnosed learning needs may also be eligible to receive accommodations for in-class work, internal and external assessments, and standardised examinations through organisations such as the International Baccalaureate, College Board and ACT.

English as an additional language (EAL) in the DP

Due to the English language demands of the IB Diploma Programme, ISA requires that all students in the DP must be at an 'independent learner' level of English language acquisition.

However, we do recognise that the rigorous academic language demands placed on students can present unique challenges to English language learners. As such, the EAL Department offers some support to individual non-English home language (mother tongue) students on an 'as needed' basis when student schedules allow for it.