

# International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Subject Brief

Individuals and societies:

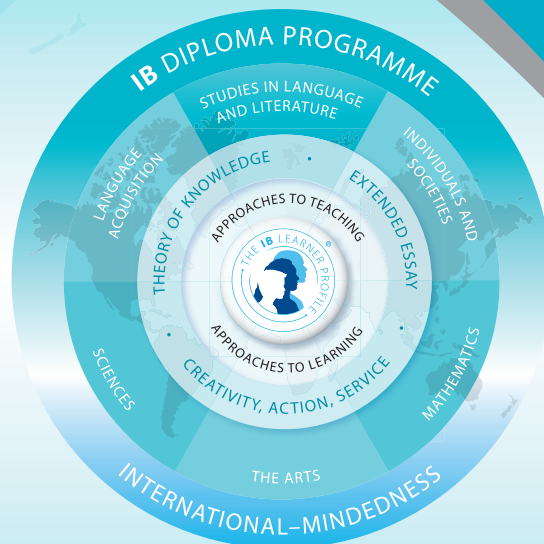
Economics—standard level

First assessments 2013—last assessments 2023



The IB Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous, academically challenging and balanced programme of education designed to prepare students aged 16 to 19 for success at university and life beyond. The DP aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable, inquiring, caring and compassionate, and to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness and the attitudes necessary to respect and evaluate a range of viewpoints. Approaches to teaching and learning (ATL) are deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes that permeate the teaching and learning environment. In the DP, students develop skills from five ATL categories: thinking, research, social, self-management and communication.

To ensure both breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, students must choose six courses from six distinct groups: 1) studies in language and literature; 2) language acquisition; 3) individuals and societies; 4) sciences; 5) mathematics; 6) the arts. Students may choose to replace the arts course with a second course from one of the other five groups. At least three, and not more than four, subjects are taken at higher level (240 recommended teaching hours), while the remaining are taken at standard level (150 recommended teaching hours). In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, activity, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.



These DP subject briefs illustrate four key course components.

- I. Course description and aims
- II. Curriculum model overview

- III. Assessment model
- IV. Sample questions

## I. Course description and aims

Economics is a dynamic social science. The study of economics is essentially about dealing with scarcity, resource allocation and the methods and processes by which choices are made in the satisfaction of human wants. As a social science, economics uses scientific methodologies that include quantitative and qualitative elements.

The DP economics course emphasizes 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 countries, governments and societies. These economic theories are not studied in a vacuum—rather, they are to be applied to real-world issues. Prominent among these issues are fluctuations in economic activity, international trade, economic development and environmental sustainability.

The economics course encourages students to develop international perspectives, fosters a concern for global issues and raises students' awareness of their own responsibilities at a local, national and international level. Teachers explicitly teach thinking and research skills such as comprehension, text analysis, transfer, and use of primary sources.

The aims of the DP **economics** course are to enable students to:

- develop an understanding of microeconomic and macroeconomic theories and concepts and their real-world application
- develop an appreciation of the impact on individuals and societies of economic interactions between nations
- develop an awareness of development issues facing nations as they undergo the process of change.

## II. Curriculum model overview

Component	Recommended teaching hours
<b>Section 1: Microeconomics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Competitive markets: demand and supply</li> <li>1.2 Elasticity</li> <li>1.3 Government intervention</li> <li>1.4 Market failure</li> </ul>	35
<b>Section 2: Macroeconomics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1. The level of overall economic activity</li> <li>2.2. Aggregate demand and aggregate supply</li> <li>2.3. Macroeconomic objectives</li> <li>2.4. Fiscal policy</li> <li>2.5. Monetary policy</li> <li>2.6. Supply-side policies</li> </ul>	40
<b>Section 3: International economics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1. International trade</li> <li>3.2. Exchange rates</li> <li>3.3. The balance of payments</li> <li>3.4. Economic integration</li> </ul>	25

<b>Section 4: Development economics</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1. Economic development	
4.2. Measuring development	
4.3. The role of domestic factors	
4.4. The role of international trade	
4.5. The role of foreign direct investment (FDI)	
4.6. The roles of foreign aid and multilateral development assistance	
4.7. The role of international debt	
4.8. The balance between markets and intervention	
<b>Internal assessment</b>	<b>20</b>
Portfolio of three commentaries	

### III. Assessment model

There are four assessment objectives for the DP economics course. Having followed the course at standard level (SL), students will be expected to meet the following objectives.

#### Assessment objective 1: Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the common SL/HL syllabus.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current economic issues and data.

#### Assessment objective 2: Application and analysis

- Apply economic concepts and theories to real-world situations.
- Identify and interpret economic data.
- Demonstrate the extent to which economic information is used effectively in particular contexts.

#### Assessment objective 3: Synthesis and evaluation

- Examine economic concepts and theories.
- Use economic concepts and examples to construct and present an argument.
- Discuss and evaluate economic information and theories.

#### Assessment objective 4: Selection, use and application of appropriate skills and techniques

- Produce well-structured written material, using appropriate economic terminology, within specified time limits.
- Use correctly labelled diagrams to help explain economic concepts and theories.
- Select, interpret and analyse appropriate extracts from the news media.
- Interpret appropriate data sets.

### Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)	Weighting of final grade (%)
External		3	80
Paper 1	Extended response paper on microeconomics and macroeconomics	1.5	40
Paper 2	Data response paper on international and development economics	1.5	40
Internal			
Portfolio	Three commentaries based on different sections of the syllabus and on published extracts from the news media.	20	20

### IV. Sample questions

- Distinguish between structural unemployment and cyclical (demand-deficient) unemployment. Discuss policies that a government might use to reduce the levels of structural unemployment and cyclical (demand-deficient) unemployment. (Paper 1)
- Using an appropriate diagram, analyse the effect of “foreign buying of shares in South African companies” on the value of the rand. (Paper 2)

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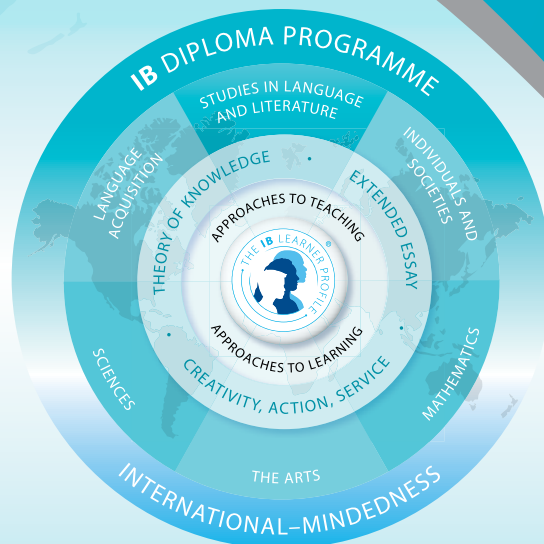
Economics— higher level

First assessments 2013—last assessments 2019



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## I. Course description and aims

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- develop an understanding of microeconomic and macroeconomic theories and concepts and their real-world application
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- develop an awareness of development issues facing nations as they undergo the process of change

## II. Curriculum model overview

Component	Recommended teaching hours
<b>Section 1: Microeconomics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.1 Competitive markets: demand and supply</li> <li>1.2 Elasticity</li> <li>1.3 Government intervention</li> <li>1.4 Market failure</li> <li>1.5 Theory of the firm and market structures</li> </ul>	95
<b>Section 2: Macroeconomics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2.1 The level of overall economic activity</li> <li>2.2 Aggregate demand and aggregate supply</li> <li>2.3 Macroeconomic objectives</li> <li>2.4 Fiscal policy</li> <li>2.5 Monetary policy</li> <li>2.6 Supply-side policies</li> </ul>	50
<b>Section 3: International economics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3.1 International trade</li> <li>3.2 Exchange rates</li> <li>3.3 The balance of payments</li> <li>3.4 Economic integration</li> <li>3.5 Terms of trade</li> </ul>	45

<b>Section 4: Development economics</b>	<b>30</b>
4.1. Economic development	
4.2. Measuring development	
4.3. The role of domestic factors	
4.4. The role of international trade	
4.5. The role of foreign direct investment (FDI)	
4.6. The roles of foreign aid and multilateral development assistance	
4.7. The role of international debt	
4.8. The balance between markets and intervention	
<b>Internal assessment</b>	<b>20</b>
Portfolio of three commentaries	

### III. Assessment model

There are four assessment objectives for the DP economics course. Having followed the course at higher level (HL), students will be expected to meet the following objectives.

#### Assessment objective 1: Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the common SL/HL syllabus.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of current economic issues and data.
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the HL extension topics.

#### Assessment objective 2: Application and analysis

- Apply economic concepts and theories to real-world situations.
- Identify and interpret economic data.
- Demonstrate the extent to which economic information is used effectively in particular contexts.
- Demonstrate application and analysis of the extension topics.

#### Assessment objective 3: Synthesis and evaluation

- Examine economic concepts and theories.
- Use economic concepts and examples to construct and present an argument.
- Discuss and evaluate economic information and theories.
- Demonstrate economic synthesis and evaluation of the extension topics.

#### Assessment objective 4: Selection, use and application of appropriate skills and techniques

- Produce well-structured written material, using appropriate economic terminology, within specified time limits.
- Use correctly labelled diagrams to help explain economic concepts and theories.
- Select, interpret and analyse appropriate extracts from the news media.
- Interpret appropriate data sets.
- Use quantitative techniques to identify, explain and analyse economic relationships

### Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)	Weighting of final grade (%)
External		4	80
Paper 1	Extended response paper on microeconomics and macroeconomics	1.5	30
Paper 2	Data response paper on international and development economics	1.5	30
Paper 3	HL extension paper on all syllabus content	1	20
Internal			
Portfolio	Three commentaries based on different sections of the syllabus and on published extracts from the news media.	20	20

### IV. Sample questions

#### Paper 1

- Explain why firms in monopolistic competition can make economic profit in the short run only.
- Compare and contrast the market structures of monopoly and monopolistic competition.

#### Paper 2

- State two reasons why a multinational corporation (MNC) may wish to invest in an economically less developed country (LDC).

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# International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Subject Brief

## Individuals and societies: Geography

First assessments 2019

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To ensure both breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, students must choose at least one subject from five groups: 1) their best language, 2) additional language(s), 3) social sciences, 4) sciences, and 5) mathematics. Students may choose either an arts subject from group 6, or a second subject from groups 1 to 5. At least three and not more than four subjects are taken at higher level (240 recommended teaching hours), while the remaining are taken at standard level (150 recommended teaching hours). In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, activity, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.

These IB DP subject briefs illustrate the following key course components.

- I. Course description and aims
- II. Curriculum model overview

- III. Assessment model
- IV. Sample questions



## I. Course description and aims

Geography is a dynamic subject 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. Geography describes and helps to explain the similarities and differences between different places, on a variety of scales and from different perspectives.

Geography as a subject is distinctive in its spatial dimension and occupies a middle ground between social or human sciences and natural sciences. The course integrates physical, environmental and human geography, and students acquire elements of both socio-economic and scientific methodologies. Geography takes advantage of its position to examine relevant concepts and ideas from a wide variety of disciplines, helping students develop life skills and have an appreciation of, and a respect for, alternative approaches, viewpoints and ideas.

Students at both SL and HL are presented with a common core and optional geographic themes. HL students also study the HL core extension. Although the skills and activity of studying geography are common to all students, HL students are required to acquire a further body of knowledge, to demonstrate critical evaluation and to further synthesize the concepts in the HL extension.

The aims of the geography course at SL and HL are to enable students to:

- develop an understanding of the dynamic interrelationships between people, places, spaces and the environment at different scales
- develop a critical awareness and consider complexity thinking in the context of the nexus of geographic issues, including:

- acquiring an in-depth understanding of how geographic issues, or wicked problems, have been shaped by powerful human and physical processes
- synthesizing diverse geographic knowledge in order to form viewpoints about how these issues could be resolved.
- understand and evaluate the need for planning and sustainable development through the management of resources at varying scales.

## II. Curriculum model overview

Syllabus component	Teaching hours	
	SL	HL
<b>Geographic themes—seven options</b> <b>SL—two options; HL— three options</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Freshwater</li> <li>• Oceans and coastal margins</li> <li>• Extreme environments</li> <li>• Geophysical hazards</li> <li>• Leisure, tourism and sport</li> <li>• Food and health</li> <li>• Urban environments</li> </ul>	60	90
<b>SL and HL core</b> <b>Geographic perspectives—global change</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Population distribution—changing population</li> <li>• Global climate—vulnerability and resilience</li> <li>• Global resource consumption and security</li> </ul>	70	70



<b>HL only</b> <b>Geographic perspectives—global interactions</b> • Power, places and networks • Human development and diversity • Global risks and resilience		60
<b>Internal assessment</b> <b>SL and HL Fieldwork</b>  Fieldwork, leading to one written report based on a fieldwork question, information collection and analysis with evaluation	20	20
<b>Total teaching hours</b>	150	240

### III. Assessment model

There are four assessment objectives (AOs) for the SL and HL geography course. Having followed the course at SL or HL, students will be expected to do the following:

#### 1. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of specified content

- between areas of film focus and film elements employed by
- the core theme—global change
- two optional themes at SL and three optional themes at HL
- at HL, the HL extension—global interactions
- in internal assessment, a specific geographic research topic.

#### 2. Demonstrate application and analysis of knowledge and understanding

- apply and analyse geographic concepts and theories
- identify and interpret geographic patterns and processes in unfamiliar information, data and cartographic material
- demonstrate the extent to which theories and concepts are recognized and understood in particular contexts.

#### 3. Demonstrate synthesis and evaluation

- examine and evaluate geographic concepts, theories and perceptions
- use geographic concepts and examples to formulate and present an argument
- evaluate materials using methodology appropriate for geographic fieldwork
- at HL only, demonstrate synthesis and evaluation of the HL extension—global interactions.

#### 4. Select, use and apply a variety of appropriate skills and techniques

- select, use and apply:
  - prescribed geographic skills in appropriate contexts
  - techniques and skills appropriate to a geographic research question.
- produce well-structured written material, using appropriate terminology.

### Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)		Weighting of final grade (%)	
		SL	HL	SL	HL
External		2.75	4.5	75	80
Paper 1	Each option has a structured question and one extended answer question from a choice of two.	1.5	2.25	35	35
Paper 2	Three structured questions, based on each SL/HL core unit. Infographic or visual stimulus, with structured questions. One extended answer question from a choice of two.	1.25	1.25	40	25
Paper 3	Choice of three extended answer questions, with two parts, based on each HL core extension unit.		1		20
Internal		20	20	25	20
Fieldwork	One written report based on a fieldwork question from any suitable syllabus topic, information collection and analysis with evaluation.	20	20	25	20

### IV. Sample questions

- Examine the role of plate margin type in determining the severity of volcanic hazards.
- Evaluate the success of attempts to predict tectonic hazard event and their possible impacts.
- Evaluate the role of agribusiness and new technologies in increasing world food supply.
- Examine the relationship between food security and health.
- Using examples, analyse how technological developments can threaten the security of states.
- To what extent does a global culture exist?

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# International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Subject Brief

## Individuals and societies: History—standard level

First assessments 2017—last assessments 2025

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To ensure both breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, students must choose six courses from six distinct groups: 1) studies in language and literature; 2) language acquisition; 3) individuals and societies; 4) sciences; 5) mathematics; 6) the arts. Students may choose to replace the arts course with a second course from one of the other five groups. At least three, and not more than four, subjects are taken at higher level (240 recommended teaching hours), while the remaining are taken at standard level (150 recommended teaching hours). In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, activity, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.

These DP subject briefs illustrate four key course components.

- I. Course description and aims
- II. Curriculum model overview



- III. Assessment model
- IV. Sample questions

## I. Course description and aims

The DP history course is a world history course based on a comparative and multi-perspective approach to history. It involves the study of a variety of types of history, including political, economic, social and cultural, and provides a balance of structure and flexibility.

The course emphasizes the importance of encouraging students to think historically and to develop historical skills as well as gaining factual knowledge. It puts a premium on developing the skills of critical thinking, and on developing an understanding of multiple interpretations of history. In this way, the course involves a challenging and demanding critical exploration of the past. Teachers explicitly teach thinking and research skills such as comprehension, text analysis, transfer, and use of primary sources.

There are six key concepts that have particular prominence throughout the DP history course: change, continuity, causation, consequence, significance and perspectives.

The aims of the DP history course are to enable students to:

- develop an understanding of, and continuing interest in, the past
- encourage students to engage with multiple perspectives and to appreciate the complex nature of historical concepts, issues, events and developments
- promote international-mindedness through the study of history from more than one region of the world

- 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
- develop key historical skills, including engaging effectively with sources
- increase students' understanding of themselves and of contemporary society by encouraging reflection on the past.

## II. Curriculum model overview

Component	Recommended teaching hours
<b>Prescribed subjects</b> <b>One of the following, using two case studies, each taken from a different region of the world:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Military leaders</li> <li>2. Conquest and its impact</li> <li>3. The move to global war</li> <li>4. Rights and protest</li> <li>5. Conflict and intervention</li> </ol>	40

<b>World history topics</b> <b>Two of the following, using topic examples from more than one region of the world:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Society and economy (750–1400)</li> <li>2. Causes and effects of medieval wars (750–1500)</li> <li>3. Dynasties and rulers (750–1500)</li> <li>4. Societies in transition (1400–1700)</li> <li>5. Early Modern states (1450–1789)</li> <li>6. Causes and effects of Early Modern wars (1500–1750)</li> <li>7. Origins, development and impact of industrialization (1750–2005)</li> <li>8. Independence movements (1800–2000)</li> <li>9. Evolution and development of democratic states (1848–2000)</li> <li>10. Authoritarian states (20th century)</li> <li>11. Causes and effects of 20th-century wars</li> <li>12. The Cold War: Superpower tensions and rivalries (20th century)</li> </ol>	90
<b>Internal assessment</b> Historical investigation	20

### III. Assessment model

There are four assessment objectives for the DP history course. Having followed the course at standard level (SL), students will be expected to meet the following objectives.

#### Assessment objective 1: Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate detailed, relevant and accurate historical knowledge.
- Demonstrate understanding of historical concepts and context.
- Demonstrate understanding of historical sources.

#### Assessment objective 2: Application and analysis

- Formulate clear and coherent arguments.
- Use relevant historical knowledge to effectively support analysis.
- Analyse and interpret a variety of sources.

#### Assessment objective 3: Synthesis and evaluation

- Integrate evidence and analysis to produce a coherent response.
- Evaluate different perspectives on historical issues and events, and integrate this evaluation effectively into a response.
- Evaluate sources as historical evidence, recognizing their value and limitations.
- Synthesize information from a selection of relevant sources.

#### Assessment objective 4: Use and application of appropriate skills

- Structure and develop focused essays that respond effectively to the demands of a question.
- Reflect on the methods used by, and challenges facing, the historian.
- Formulate an appropriate, focused question to guide a historical inquiry.
- Demonstrate evidence of research skills, organization, reference and selection of appropriate sources.

### Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)	Weighting of final grade (%)
External		2.5	75
Paper 1	Source-based paper based on the five prescribed subjects	1	30
Paper 2	Essay paper based on the 12 world history topics	1.5	45
Internal			
Historical investigation	A historical investigation into a topic of the student's choice.	20	25

### IV. Sample questions

Paper 2 (HL and SL)

- Examine the impact of industrialization on standards of living and working conditions in one country.
- Compare and contrast the impact on women of the policies of two authoritarian states, each chosen from a different region.
- Compare and contrast the role of technology in determining the outcome of two 20th-century wars.
- Examine the impact of the US policy of containment on superpower relations between 1947 and 1964.

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## Individuals and societies:

### History—higher level

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The course emphasizes the importance of encouraging students to think historically and to develop historical skills as well as gaining factual knowledge. It puts a premium on developing the skills of critical thinking, and on developing an understanding of multiple interpretations of history. In this way, the course involves a challenging and demanding critical exploration of the past. Teachers explicitly teach thinking and research skills such as comprehension, text analysis, transfer, and use of primary sources.

There are six key concepts that have particular prominence throughout the DP history course: change, continuity, causation, consequence, significance and perspectives.

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- encourage students to engage with multiple perspectives and to appreciate the complex nature of historical concepts, issues, events and developments
- promote international-mindedness through the study of history from more than one region of the world

- 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
- develop key historical skills, including engaging effectively with sources
- increase students' understanding of themselves and of contemporary society by encouraging reflection on the past.

## II. Curriculum model overview

Component	Recommended teaching hours
<b>Prescribed subjects</b> <b>One of the following, using two case studies, each taken from a different region of the world:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Military leaders</li> <li>2. Conquest and its impact</li> <li>3. The move to global war</li> <li>4. Rights and protest</li> <li>5. Conflict and intervention</li> </ol>	<b>40</b>

<b>World history topics</b> <b>Two of the following, using topic examples from more than one region of the world:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Society and economy (750–1400)</li> <li>2. Causes and effects of medieval wars (750–1500)</li> <li>3. Dynasties and rulers (750–1500)</li> <li>4. Societies in transition (1400–1700)</li> <li>5. Early Modern states (1450–1789)</li> <li>6. Causes and effects of Early Modern wars (1500–1750)</li> <li>7. Origins, development and impact of industrialization (1750–2005)</li> <li>8. Independence movements (1800–2000)</li> <li>9. Evolution and development of democratic states (1848–2000)</li> <li>10. Authoritarian states (20th century)</li> <li>11. Causes and effects of 20th-century wars</li> <li>12. The Cold War: Superpower tensions and rivalries (20th century)</li> </ol>	<b>90</b>
<b>HL options: Depth studies</b> <b>One of the following:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. History of Africa and the Middle East</li> <li>2. History of the Americas</li> <li>3. History of Asia and Oceania</li> <li>4. History of Europe</li> </ol>	<b>90</b>
<b>Internal assessment</b> Historical investigation	<b>20</b>

#### Assessment objective 4: Use and application of appropriate skills

- Structure and develop focused essays that respond effectively to the demands of a question.
- Reflect on the methods used by, and challenges facing, the historian.
- Formulate an appropriate, focused question to guide a historical inquiry.
- Demonstrate evidence of research skills, organization, reference and selection of appropriate sources.

#### Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)	Weighting of final grade (%)
External		5	80
Paper 1	Source-based paper based on the five prescribed subjects	1	20
Paper 2	Essay paper based on the 12 world history topics	1.5	25
Paper 3	Essay paper based on one of the four regional options	2.5	35
Internal			
Historical investigation	A historical investigation into a topic of the student's choice.	20	20

### III. Assessment model

There are four assessment objectives for the DP history course. Having followed the course at higher level (HL), students will be expected to meet the following objectives.

#### Assessment objective 1: Knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate detailed, relevant and accurate historical knowledge.
- Demonstrate understanding of historical concepts and context.
- Demonstrate understanding of historical sources.

#### Assessment objective 2: Application and analysis

- Formulate clear and coherent arguments.
- Use relevant historical knowledge to effectively support analysis.
- Analyse and interpret a variety of sources.

#### Assessment objective 3: Synthesis and evaluation

- Integrate evidence and analysis to produce a coherent response.
- Evaluate different perspectives on historical issues and events, and integrate this evaluation effectively into a response.
- Evaluate sources as historical evidence, recognizing their value and limitations.
- Synthesize information from a selection of relevant sources.

### IV. Sample questions

Paper 1

When presented with five sources related to the enforcements of the provisions of the treaties, disarmament and London Naval Conference (1930), students will:

- explain the significance of the Conference
- compare and contrast the views of the Conference presented in different sources
- assess the value and limitations of sources
- use the sources and their own knowledge to discuss the extent to which they agree with the view that the London Naval Conference was unsuccessful.

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Complete subject guides can be accessed through the IB online curriculum centre (OCC) or purchased through the IB store: <http://store.ibo.org>.

For more on how the DP prepares students for success at university, visit: [www.ibo.org/en/university-admission](http://www.ibo.org/en/university-admission) or email: [recognition@ibo.org](mailto:recognition@ibo.org).

The IB Diploma Programme, for students aged 16 to 19, is an academically challenging and balanced programme of education that prepares students for success at university and life beyond. Students take courses in six different subject groups, maintaining both breadth and depth of study. Psychology standard level is in group 3, individuals and societies. In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, action, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.

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The IB subject briefs illustrate four key course components in the IB Diploma Programme.

- |                                |                       |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|
| I. Course description and aims | III. Assessment model |
| II. Curriculum model overview  | IV. Sample questions  |

## Overview of the psychology standard level course and curriculum model

### I. Course description and aims

The IB Diploma Programme standard level psychology course aims to develop an awareness of how research findings can be applied to better understand human behaviour and how ethical practices are upheld in psychological inquiry. Students learn to understand the biological, cognitive and sociocultural influences on human behaviour and explore alternative explanations of behaviour. They also understand and use diverse methods of psychological inquiry.

In addition, the course is designed to:

- encourage the systematic and critical study of human experience and behaviour and environments
- develop the capacity to identify, analyse critically and evaluate theories, concepts and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society
- enable students to collect, describe and analyse data used in studies of behaviour; test hypotheses; and interpret complex data and source material
- enable students to recognize that the content and methodologies are contestable and that their study requires the toleration of uncertainty
- develop an awareness of how psychological research can be applied for better understanding of human behaviour
- ensure that ethical practices are upheld in psychological inquiry
- develop an understanding of the biological, cognitive and sociocultural influences on human behaviour
- develop an understanding of alternative explanations of behaviour
- understand and use diverse methods of psychological inquiry

### II. Curriculum model overview

#### Psychology standard level

Components		90 hours
Core	90 hours of standard level instruction on 3 topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The biological level of analysis</li> <li>• The cognitive level of analysis</li> <li>• The sociocultural level of analysis</li> </ul>	90 hours

Options	30 hours of instruction on one additional topic <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Abnormal psychology</li> <li>• Developmental psychology</li> <li>• Health psychology</li> <li>• Psychology of human relationships</li> <li>• Sport psychology</li> </ul>	30 hours
Experimental Study	Introduction to experimental research methodology	30 hours
Total teaching hours		150 hours

### III. Assessment model

#### Assessment for psychology standard level

The IB assesses student work as direct evidence of achievement against the stated goals of the Diploma Programme courses, which are to provide students with:

- a broad and balanced, yet academically demanding, programme of study
- the development of critical-thinking and reflective skills
- the development of research skills
- the development of independent learning skills
- the development of intercultural understanding
- a globally recognized university entrance qualification.

The assessments aim to test all students' knowledge and understanding of key concepts through:

- knowledge and comprehension of specified content, research methods and theories, such as key concepts, biological, cognitive and sociocultural levels of analysis
- application and analysis, including using psychological research and psychological concepts to formulate an argument in response to a specific question
- synthesis and evaluation of psychological theories, empirical studies, and research methods used to investigate behaviour
- selection and use of skills appropriate to psychology, the acquisition of knowledge, skills required for experimental design, data collection and presentation, data analysis and interpretation
- data analysis using an appropriate statistical test and write an organized response.

## Assessment for psychology standard level (continued)

Students' success in the psychology standard level course is measured by combining their grades on an external and internal assessment.

On external assessments, students must be able to demonstrate an understanding of both basic facts and complex concepts related to the biological, cognitive and sociocultural levels of analysis. For their internal assessment, standard level psychology students plan, undertake and report on a replication of a simple experimental study

## Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)	Weighting of final grade (%)
<b>External</b>			<b>75</b>
<i>Paper 1</i>	Question response and an essay	2	50
<i>Paper 2</i>	Answer one of 15 questions in essay form	1	25
<b>Internal</b>			<b>25</b>
<i>Study Report</i>	A report of a simple experimental study conducted by the student		

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## IV. Sample questions

The following questions appeared in previous IB Diploma Programme psychology standard level examinations.\*

1. Discuss the use of one research method (e.g. experiments, case studies) in the cognitive level of analysis. Use relevant research studies in your response. (Paper 1)
2. Discuss how
  - biological, or
  - cognitive, or
  - socio-culturalfactors influence psychological disorders. (Paper 2)
3. Evaluate one theory of motivation in sport. (Paper 2)

\* the syllabus for examinations current until 2016

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The IB subject briefs illustrate key course components in the IB Diploma Programme.

I. Course description and aims

III. Assessment model

II. Curriculum model overview

IV. Sample questions

## Overview of the psychology higher level course and curriculum model

### I. Course description and aims

The IB Diploma Programme higher level psychology course aims to develop an awareness of how research findings can be applied to better understand human behaviour and how ethical practices are upheld in psychological inquiry. Students learn to understand the biological, cognitive and sociocultural influences on human behaviour and explore alternative explanations of behaviour. They also understand and use diverse methods of psychological inquiry.

In addition, the course is designed to:

- encourage the systematic and critical study of human experience and behaviour; physical, economic and social environments; and the history and development of social and cultural institutions
- develop the capacity to identify, analyse critically and evaluate theories, concepts and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society
- enable students to collect, describe and analyse data used in studies, test hypotheses; and interpret complex data and source material
- enable the student to recognize that the content and methodologies are contestable and that their study requires the toleration of uncertainty
- develop an awareness of how psychological research can be applied for the better understanding of human behaviour
- ensure that ethical practices are upheld in psychological inquiry
- develop an understanding of the biological, cognitive and sociocultural influences on human behaviour
- develop an understanding of alternative explanations of behavior
- understand and use diverse methods of psychological inquiry.

### II. Curriculum model overview

#### Psychology higher level

<i>Core</i>	90 hours of instruction on three topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The biological level of analysis</li><li>• The cognitive level of analysis</li><li>• The sociocultural level of analysis</li></ul>	90 hours
<i>Options</i>	30 hours of instruction on two additional topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Abnormal psychology</li><li>• Developmental psychology</li><li>• Health psychology</li><li>• Psychology of human relationships</li><li>• Sport psychology</li></ul>	60 hours
<i>Additional higher level</i>	Qualitative research in psychology	50 hours
<i>Experimental study</i>	Introduction to experimental research methodology	40 hours
<b>Total teaching hours</b>		<b>240 hours</b>



### III. Assessment model

#### Assessment for psychology higher level

The IB assesses student work as direct evidence of achievement against the stated goals of the Diploma Programme courses, which are to provide students with:

- a broad and balanced, yet academically demanding, programme of study
- the development of critical-thinking and reflective skills
- the development of research skills
- the development of independent learning skills
- the development of intercultural understanding
- a globally recognized university entrance qualification.

The assessments aim to test all students' knowledge and understanding of key concepts through various activities that demonstrate:

- knowledge and comprehension of specified content, research methods, theories, such as key concepts, biological, cognitive and sociocultural levels of analysis
- application and analysis, including using psychological research and psychological concepts to formulate an argument in response to a specific question
- synthesis and evaluation of psychological theories, empirical studies, and research methods used to investigate behaviour
- selection and use of skills appropriate to psychology, the acquisition of knowledge, skills required for experimental design, data collection and presentation, data analysis and interpretation
- data analysis using an appropriate inferential statistical test and write an organized response.

Students' success in the psychology higher level course is measured by combining their grades on external and internal assessment.

On external assessments, students must be able to demonstrate an understanding of both basic facts and complex concepts related to the biological, cognitive and sociocultural levels of analysis. Students in higher level courses are also assessed on their knowledge and understanding of qualitative research. For their internal assessment, psychology higher level students plan, undertake and report on a simple experimental study.

#### Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)	Weighting of final grade (%)
<b>External</b>			<b>80</b>
<i>Paper 1</i>	Question response and an essay	2	35
<i>Paper 2</i>	Answer 2 of 15 questions in essay form	2	25
<i>Paper 3</i>	Answer three questions	1	20
<b>Internal</b>			<b>20</b>
<i>Study report</i>	A report of a simple experimental study conducted by the student		

### IV. Sample questions

The following questions appeared in previous IB Diploma Programme psychology higher level examinations.\*

1. To what extent does genetic inheritance influence behaviour? Use relevant research studies in your response. (Paper 1)
2. Evaluate two research studies investigating the role of communication in maintaining relationships. (Paper 2)
3. The study outlined above uses the phrase "inductive content analysis". Explain the advantages and disadvantages of using this research strategy in the context of this specific study. (Paper 3, with regard to a supplied study)

\* the syllabus for examinations current until 2016

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