

IB FAQ's

What type of student can do the IB program?

A well motivated student who is hungry for learning and wants a well rounded and rigorous education in an international setting. The key to success in the IB program is hard work and organization. If a student has these qualities to begin, then they will likely be successful.

What is unique about the full IB diploma program?

The program offers breadth and depth in each subject curriculum. It is also tied together by the "Core" aspects which are the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and the Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) program. All of the subjects and the "Core" help students to develop critical thinking skills and knowledge, but even more than that it enables students to be reflective, compassionate and open-minded. Students who complete the program are generally excellent communicators with strong principles and who are truly prepared for college and beyond. We aim to develop our students into being life-long lovers of learning.

What's the difference between the full IB diploma program and individual IB subject program at Village?

The full IB diploma program students will be strong students in all subject areas. Their program will be everything IB, that is to say, their schedule will be fixed for 2 years and they will have no room for any other electives to be chosen (unless they give up lunch!). This will only be possible for students who have a proven track record of success, and are willing to commit to a very rigorous 2 years. On the other hand, our mixed track students will be students who are strong in some subjects, but not all, or they don't have the will or study habits to commit to the full program. Students who are full IB diploma students generally have a better chance of gaining offers of admission to universities of their choice. Mixed track students are generally seen as equivalent to students who are taking an AP program. Generally most colleges/universities will give credit for IB courses, regardless of whether they are taken as part of a mixed program or a full diploma program. However, college recognition policies are subject to change and they are all different. To search a specific college/university IB recognition policy in any country, please visit: <http://www.ibo.org/recognition/university/>

What is the difference between Higher Level (HL) and Standard Level (SL) courses?

Generally HL subjects have a larger and more in depth curriculum than SL subjects. All of our levels of subjects are currently taught over 2 years. Language acquisition classes and Math classes are taught in leveled classes, whereas all other subjects are taught in mixed classes and differentiated. Students will be placed in Language and Math classes depending on their level at the start of the course, whereas all of the other subject levels will not need to be decided upon until the end of the 2nd semester of the junior year. Note that Environmental Systems and Societies is only offered at SL. Students working toward the full IB diploma will need to make sure that they can test in 3 subjects at HL and 3 at SL. Individual IB subject candidates can do any combination of SL/HL

How does the IB program compare to AP?

The IB program develops students across a wide range of disciplines and considers critical thinking skills as a vital part of teaching and learning. This is not necessarily true of AP. IB subject grades come from testing a range of skills including final examinations, Internal Assessments (IA's) and essays and oral work completed by the student during the course, which are externally graded and/or moderated

by other IB teachers across the world. The AP has a greater emphasis on the final exam, which can be limiting to some students. All of the IB courses at Village are two years long, giving the students chance to study in depth, explore concepts, discuss applications and reflect. All IB courses have an international element too.

Do IB students have the opportunity to do extracurricular activities i.e. music, athletics, community service?

All IB diploma candidates must successfully complete a Creativity, Action and Service (CAS) program which can involve all three of the above types of activities. Students choose what activities they want to get involved in, so the CAS program is truly student designed. A worthwhile CAS program will develop student confidence, caring and encourage risk-taking. Students only have to complete the CAS program if they are taking the full IB diploma program. Most students who do the CAS program automatically meet the Village School graduation requirements for community service. Mixed track IB students must make sure they meet the minimum community service hours for graduation. IB students are encouraged to continue doing the activities they enjoy too. These activities will mostly be eligible to meet CAS requirements. They should consult Ms. Kelly Kretschmar, the IB CAS coordinator to make sure their program is suitable. (kkretschmar@thevillageschool.com)

Is the IB curriculum the same all over the world?

The curriculum on offer to schools is the same across the world, however individual schools may choose to teach different subjects depending on the needs of the students and resources available. All courses are developed by committees of people from all corners of the earth and published to IB schools to follow. All courses are reviewed for relevance and to account for changes in technology, knowledge and research constantly, and changes are made to reflect this every 5-7 years. Because the curriculum is the same across the world, it should be possible for a student to change schools if the need arises.

How easy is it for a student to transfer to another IB world school?

In theory, it should be a reasonably smooth transition, as long as the school offers the same subjects. Obviously teachers teach courses in a logical sequence, but there may be some differences across schools. If a transfer is likely, there will need to be close communication between the family, current school and potential new school.

How much homework is involved in the IB?

Probably more than most programs. Because the program is so packed with subjects, the Theory of Knowledge class and Extended Essay, homework is an essential part of keeping up with the demands. Students can expect particularly heavy loads of homework at the end of each semester to prepare for exams, and during the senior year 1st semester and beginning of the 2nd semester, since this is the time when most of the Internal Assessments (IA's) are completed. Students are expected to set aside time outside of the classroom to review materials and to read around their subjects in addition to set homework.

How do students decide which courses to take?

Students taking the full IB diploma will decide on 6 subjects chosen from each of the 6 IB subject groups. Their subject courses should be chosen with the following in mind:

(a) Individual student needs and ability levels

- (b) Looking ahead to a career path. Are certain subjects a requirement for university?
- (c) Recommendations by teachers
- (d) Discussion between parent, student, and teacher/college/guidance counselor

During 10th grade advisory classes in the 1st and 2nd semester, students will be educated about the program and its requirements. During the 2nd semester individual meetings will take place with students (parents invited too) with Mrs. Montoney or Mrs. Richardson, to help with final selections.

What major projects are assigned in the program?

All subjects will have some kind of "Internal Assessment" (IA) which is worth approximately 20-30% of their final grade. Depending on which subject a student takes will determine the nature of the Internal Assessment. For example, the Internal Assessment for English Literature involves oral commentary, oral presentation and the submission of a Works in Translation assignment; whereas the Internal Assessment for the Sciences involves students formally writing up lab work which they have designed and carried out themselves.

Do universities award scholarships for IB students?

Many will. Most also give credits for courses. The best way to find out about scholarships is to contact a university directly. A good starting point to find out about credit/recognition is by visiting:
<http://www.ibo.org/recognition/university/>

What if a student starts the IB program then decides that is not the right program for them?

As long as the student changes their courses during the add-drop period at the beginning of the junior year, there won't be any red flag on their transcript. If a student chooses to change after that time, their transcript will show a "withdrawal" unless they wait until the end of a semester. If you begin as a full IB Diploma student, then 'drop' to individual IB subjects, your transcript will reflect this. Many students do adjust their schedules for a variety of reasons throughout their junior and senior year, and while it is not advised, if there is good reason, college counselors will be able to explain changes in their recommendation letters. It is important that students choose their program carefully during 10th grade though. The less changes there are, the more consistent their transcript will look.

How do colleges recognize the IB program?

All colleges recognize the program differently. In general, IB students have an advantage in the admissions process and most US colleges will give credit for IB courses, whether taken as part of a full or mixed IB program. A good starting point to find out about credit/recognition is by visiting:
<http://www.ibo.org/recognition/university/>

Can IB get a student into university in other parts of the world?

Absolutely. IB is a recognized qualification across the world. Families should look at admissions policies before the start of the IB program, since some colleges/universities will require certain point scores and even be as specific as requiring specific subjects at Higher Level.