

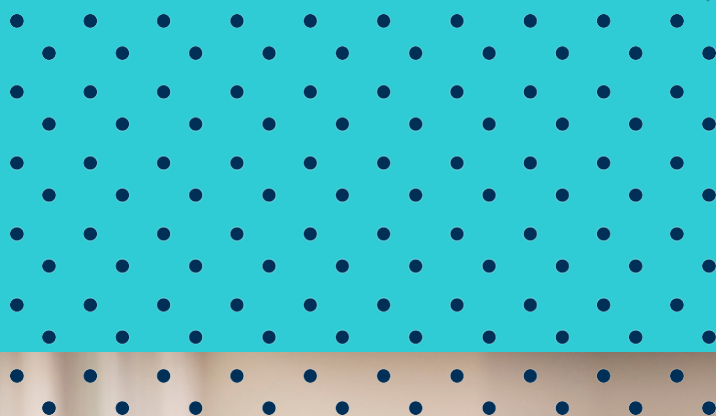
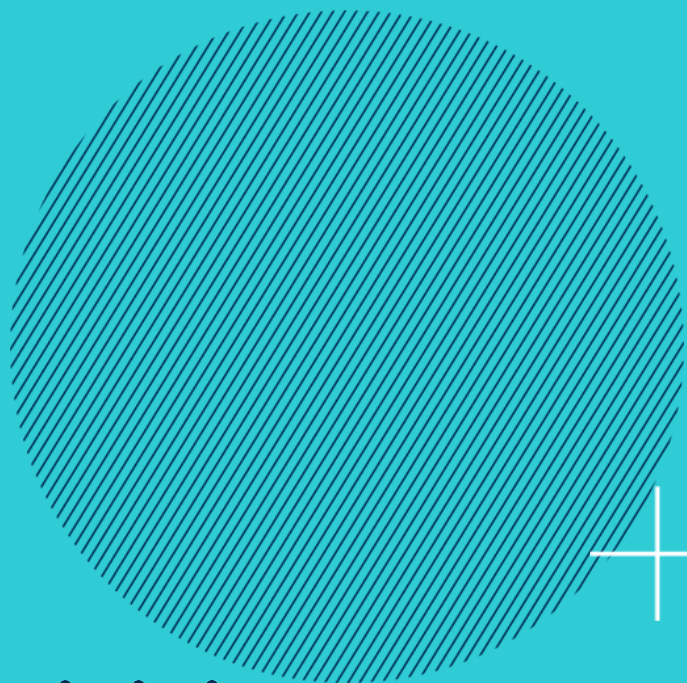


BRITISH INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
OF BOSTON
A NORD ANGLIA EDUCATION SCHOOL



IBDP Course Choices

2023-24 Academic Year



Subject Choices offered at BISB

All IB Diploma Programme candidates study six subjects, one from each of the six subject groups (another subject from Groups 2-4 may be taken in place of an Arts subject in Group 6). They must also select three subjects at Higher Level (HL) and three subjects at Standard Level (SL).

Group 1 – Studies in Language and Literature

English A: Literature ([Higher Level and Standard Level](#))

This course aims to explore the depth and richness of literature in all its forms. Students study thirteen texts at Higher Level or nine at Standard Level focusing on three key Areas of Exploration: Readers, Writers and Texts, Time and Space, and Intertextuality. The aim of the course is to transcend cultures and time periods to explore issues that have global resonance.

English A: Language & Literature ([Higher Level and Standard Level](#))

The course allows students to explore language in its many forms and uses. Students will study everything from classic literature to pictures and social media across three Areas of Exploration: Readers, Writers and Texts, Time and Space, and Intertextuality. The aim of the course is to engage with contemporary global issues and the role that language plays within them.

Group 2 – Language Acquisition

French or Spanish B ([Higher Level and Standard Level](#))

Language B is a foreign language course for students with previous experience of learning the language. It is primarily a language acquisition program, although some literature is studied in the HL course as a means of understanding the diverse use of the language. The emphasis in the language B program is on communicative skills in speech and writing, and on learning about the culture of the countries where the language is spoken.

Aside from the literature component at HL, the main difference between the HL and the SL courses is that HL students are expected to show a much wider range of vocabulary, a firm command of grammar and an effective use of complex sentence structures. As a rule of thumb, we expect about 3-5 years of previous learning for the SL course, and 5+ years of previous learning for the HL course. However, what is appropriate will vary individually and the school is happy to advise students about the choice of level.

Italian Ab Initio ([Standard Level only](#))

Offered at SL, this is a foreign language learning program for absolute beginners.

Group 3 – Individuals and Societies

Business Management ([Higher Level](#) and [Standard Level](#))

Both the HL and SL Business Management courses aim to provide an opportunity for real-world application of business solutions through the exploration of four interdisciplinary concepts: creativity, change, ethics and sustainability. The Higher Level course offers opportunity for greater focus on operational management and social enterprises in addition to the Standard Level content.

History ([Higher Level](#) and [Standard Level](#))

Both History HL and SL classes study a selection of twentieth century world history topics. At HL students also study one regional option in depth, currently the Americas. Students develop the ability to interpret a wide variety of source material and to discuss and debate the divergent views of historians.

Psychology ([Standard Level](#))

This course examines the interaction of biological, cognitive, and sociocultural influences on human behaviour. Students can expect to develop an understanding of how psychological knowledge is generated, developed, and applied. This will allow them to have a greater understanding of themselves and appreciate the diversity of human behaviour. The course also considers ethical and methodological considerations in psychological research, which helps students when they come to design, run, and assess their own psychology experiments.

Group 4 – Sciences

Biology ([Higher and Standard Level](#))

Biology is the scientific study of living things and how they function. It is an experimental science that combines academic study with practical and investigational skills. The core themes are: cell biology, molecular biology, genetics, ecology, evolution and biodiversity, and human physiology. HL students study some topics in greater depth and some additional topics, such as plant biology and animal physiology.

Chemistry ([Higher and Standard Level](#))

Chemical principles underpin both the physical environment in which we live and all biological systems, and chemistry is a pre-requisite for many science higher education courses. It is an experimental science that combines academic study with practical and investigational skills. The core themes are: stoichiometric relationships, atomic structure, periodicity, chemical bonding and structure, energetics, chemical kinetics, equilibrium, acids and bases, redox processes, organic chemistry, and measurement and data processing. The HL course goes into greater depth.

Physics ([Higher and Standard Level](#))

Physics is the study of the properties and interactions of matter and energy. It is an experimental science that combines academic study with practical and investigational skills. The core themes are: measurement and uncertainties, mechanics, thermal physics, waves, electricity and magnetism, circular motion and gravitation, atomic, nuclear and particle physics, and energy production. The HL course goes into the topics in greater depth. No specific level of achievement in Mathematics is required for any IB science course, but HL Physics students are often advised to combine it with HL Mathematics, and SL Physics students are advised to take SL Mathematics.

Computer Science ([Higher and Standard Level](#))

Computational thinking lies at the heart of the course and is integrated with other topics. This will be supported by practical activities including programming, a case study and a project to develop a product and associated documentation. Themes covered include computer systems, computer organization and networks. HL students additionally study abstract data structures, resource management and control.

Environmental Systems and Societies ([Standard Level only](#))

Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS) is an interdisciplinary course offered only at Standard Level (SL). This course can fulfill either the Individuals and Societies or the Sciences requirement. Alternatively, this course enables students to satisfy the requirements of both subject groups simultaneously while studying one course. ESS is firmly grounded in both a scientific exploration of environmental systems in their structure and function, and in the exploration of cultural, economic, ethical, political and social interactions of societies with the environment. As a result of studying this course, students will become equipped with the ability to recognize and evaluate the impact of our complex system of societies on the natural world.

Sport, Exercise and Health Science ([Higher and Standard Level](#))

SEHS is an exciting course that combines study with the acquisition of practical and investigative skills. Both SL and HL courses undertake the common core syllabus and an internal assessment (IA). The core consists of study in anatomy, exercise physiology, energy systems, movement analysis, skill in sports and measurement and evaluation of human performance. At HL, students' study in more detail further anatomy, the endocrine system, fatigue, friction and drag, skill acquisition and analysis, genetics and athletic performance, exercise and immunity. Additionally, there is an options unit at HL including choice of nutrition for sports, exercise and health, physical activity and health, psychology of sports or optimizing physiological performance. Although helpful, no prior study of examined Physical Education is required for this course.

The exponential growth of the sport and leisure industries has opened up a wealth of options for further education and study that utilize the skills and content of the SEHS course. Courses include: Physical Education, Coaching science, Physiotherapy, Public Health and Applied Sport Science.

Group 5 – Mathematics

Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches ([Higher Level and Standard Level](#))

The Analysis and Approaches course covers a wide range of algebraic and geometric topics including analytical trigonometry, logarithms and calculus; students following the HL version of the course go on to work with complex numbers, differential equations and vectors. At both HL and SL, learners have the opportunity to develop strong mathematical thinking skills, as well as their ability to construct and follow logical arguments and proofs. The Analysis and Approaches strand is a good fit for learners who enjoy spotting patterns and solving problems, and it would be excellent preparation for any course which requires logical thinking, analytical expertise, or fluency with algebra and functions, such as engineering or computer science. At Higher Level, this course is a very challenging program designed for students with a strong background in mathematics and who might want to study it further.

Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations ([Higher and Standard Level](#))

The Applications and Interpretations course also develops learners' skills in algebra and geometry, but it focuses more on the applications of these ideas in a range of contexts. For instance, students might apply their calculus to find optimum solutions to real-life problems or use their knowledge of equations of straight lines to construct and interpret Voronoi diagrams. All students extend their skills with statistics and probability, learning about some common distributions and hypothesis tests, and at HL learners go on to explore matrices and graph theory. The Applications and Interpretation strand is a good fit for learners who are more interested in the uses of mathematics, and it would be excellent preparation for any course which requires procedural confidence with mathematics or statistical understanding, such as a business degree or one in the natural or social sciences.

Group 6 – The Arts

Film ([Higher Level and Standard Level](#))

The DP Film course is one that encourages students to understand, appreciate and critique the full spectrum of the filmmaking process. Practical filmmaking exercises are complemented by reflections on the process which encourages students to be conscious of their intentions as well as their ability to collaborate. The course also encourages diversity in the films which are used for written and multimedia analysis. Students are required to have a detailed understanding of a film's political, economic, geographic, historic and social context in order to show a true appreciation of a film's purpose and reception.

Theatre ([Higher Level and Standard Level](#))

The IBDP Theatre course is a multifaceted theatre-making course. It gives students the opportunity to make theatre as creators, designers, directors, and performers. It emphasizes the importance of working both individually and as part of an ensemble. It offers the opportunity to engage actively in the creative process of inquiring, developing, presenting, and evaluating. Students are encouraged to work as inquisitive and imaginative artists, transforming ideas into action, and communicating these to an audience. Assessment tasks indicate a distinction between SL and HL. They allow for greater breadth and depth in the teaching and learning at HL through an additional assessment task, which requires HL students to immerse themselves in the works of key theatre theorists.

Visual Arts ([Higher Level and Standard Level](#))

Students of visual arts study three interrelated areas: visual arts in context, visual arts methods and communicating visual arts. Visual arts in context provides a lens through which students are encouraged to explore perspectives, theories and cultures that inform and influence visual arts practice. Visual arts methods address ways of making artwork through the exploration and acquisition of skills, techniques and processes, and through engagement with a variety of media and methods. Communicating visual arts involves students investigating, understanding and applying the processes involved in selecting work for exhibition and public display. The HL students go into greater depth and breadth with their exploration of these three areas.

The Core

The Core of the Diploma Programme is a common element for all students and is designed to tie together all their areas of study and reinforce all of the

[Creativity, Activity, Service](#)

Also known as CAS, this aspect of the Diploma Programme encourages students to think about their impact outside of their academic studies by engaging in the world around them on both a global and a local level. Students consider and action meaningful activities that allow them opportunities for growth and reflection across a range of activities. Students take part in this process across both years of the Diploma Programme.

[Extended Essay](#)

The EE is a 4,000-word academic essay, devised and written independently by the student but with the support of a supervisor. The goal is for students to explore an area of their chosen subjects in greater depth and learn about the process of academic research, drafting and reflection. This is excellent preparation for the rigors of academic writing expected in further education.

Theory of Knowledge

TOK plays a special role in the Diploma Programme. In this class, students are encouraged to reflect on the nature of knowledge and on how we know what we know. TOK groups academic subjects into five key areas of knowledge: Natural Science, Human Science, History, the Arts, and Mathematics. Students are required to draw on subject material from their DP subjects and consider abstract questions such as: what counts as good evidence for knowledge claims; how knowledge is created and acquired; how certain that knowledge is; and what factors might impact the reliability of knowledge? They are encouraged to consider their roles as knowers, as well as the impact of technology, religion, politics, language, and indigenous societies on the knowledge that they acquire. A key requirement of the course is that students are able to show how abstract TOK concepts (such as power, truth, culture, justification, interpretation, and perspective) manifest in the real-world, and in particular, in their own lives. It is a truly mind-opening and challenging course which helps each student to make sense of and evaluate their own personal knowledge journey through many years of formal education.

