

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE HANDBOOK 2009-2010



ST. STEPHEN'S SCHOOL
ROME, ITALY



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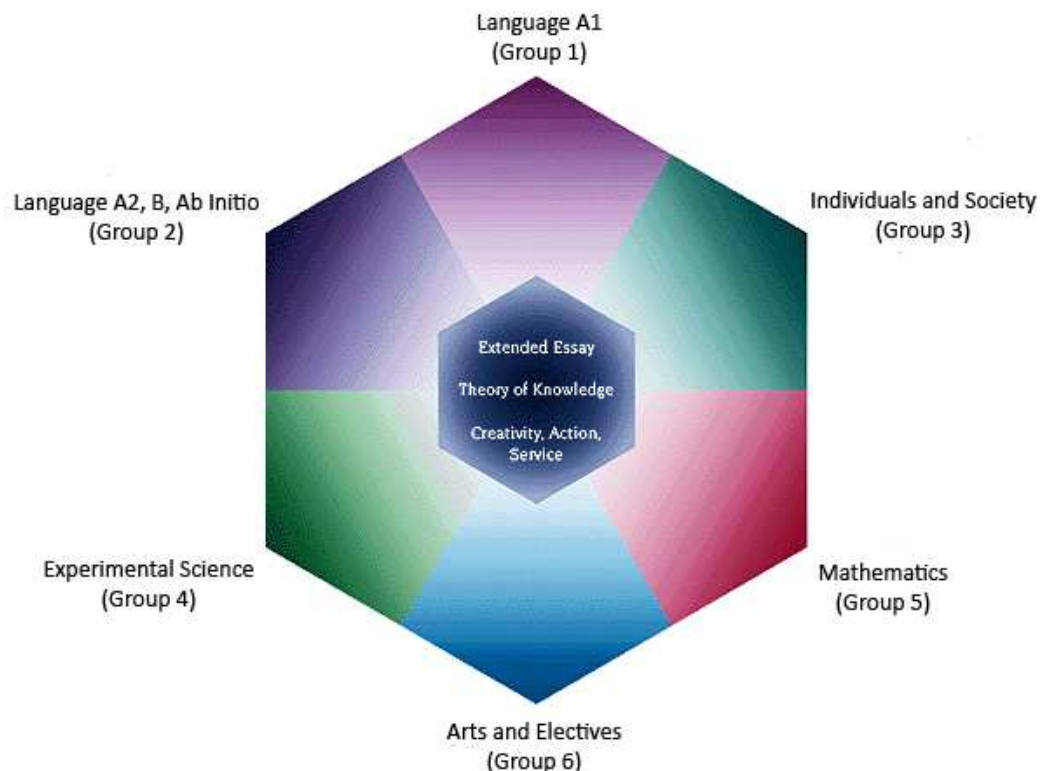
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International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

INTRODUCTION St. Stephen's realized in the early 1970s the potential importance of the International Baccalaureate as a university entrance qualification with an international dimension. Our first two students received their diplomas in 1978, and our early IB school number, 0061, testifies to our pioneer spirit. Currently there are 1770 schools around the world registering candidates of 215 different nationalities for the IB Diploma: 500 of these schools are found in the Africa-Europe-Middle East region, 653 in North America, 114 in Latin America and 165 in Asia - Pacific. In May 2008, the IBO examined 87,777 candidates.

"The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is a rigorous pre-university course of studies, leading to examinations, that meets the needs of highly motivated secondary school students between the ages of 16 and 19 years. Designed as a comprehensive two-year curriculum that allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of various national education systems, the diploma model is based on the pattern of no single country but incorporates the best elements of many. The programme is available in English, French and Spanish. " (IBO)

THE HEXAGON The curriculum is displayed in the shape of a hexagon with six academic areas surrounding the core. Subjects are studied concurrently and students are exposed to the two great traditions of learning: the humanities and the sciences.



THE IB CURRICULUM

All IB Diploma candidates are required to take one subject from each of the six groups. At least three and not more than four are taken at the **Higher Level (HL)**, while the others are taken at the **Standard Level (SL)**. Successful Diploma Programme candidates meet three requirements in addition to the six subjects. The interdisciplinary Theory of Knowledge (ToK) course is designed to develop a coherent approach to learning that transcends and unifies the academic areas and encourages appreciation of diverse cultural perspectives. The extended essay of some 4000 words offers the opportunity to investigate a topic of special interest and acquaints students with the independent research and writing skills expected at university. Participation in the creativity, action, service (CAS) requirement encourages students to be involved in creative pursuits, physical activities and service projects in local, national and international contexts.

Candidates take exams in six subjects, each corresponding to an area of the hexagon. Each subject is graded on a scale from one point (the lowest) to seven points (the highest). The maximum score is 45 points: 42 from the individual subjects and a maximum of three bonus points available for combined performance in the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge components.

Assessment of student performance takes a variety of forms. In nearly all subjects, some of the assessment is carried out within the school by teachers. Internally assessed coursework is moderated by the IB through sampling of work. External examinations form the basis of the final assessment counting for between 50-70%.

The award of the Diploma requires a minimum total of 24 points with no failing condition. Failing conditions are detailed in Article 12 of the *IB Diploma Programme General Regulations* (Appendix A).

WHO SHOULD DO THE IB DIPLOMA?

There are two groups of students who should pursue the IB Diploma: those who need it for entrance to the universities of their choice and those who, academically able and motivated, want to undertake a challenging course of study. They must be willing to work hard, and be able to organize their time effectively.

Students who choose not to pursue the full IB Diploma may take **IB Certificates**. Study for IB examinations may be combined with Advanced Placement in some subject areas.

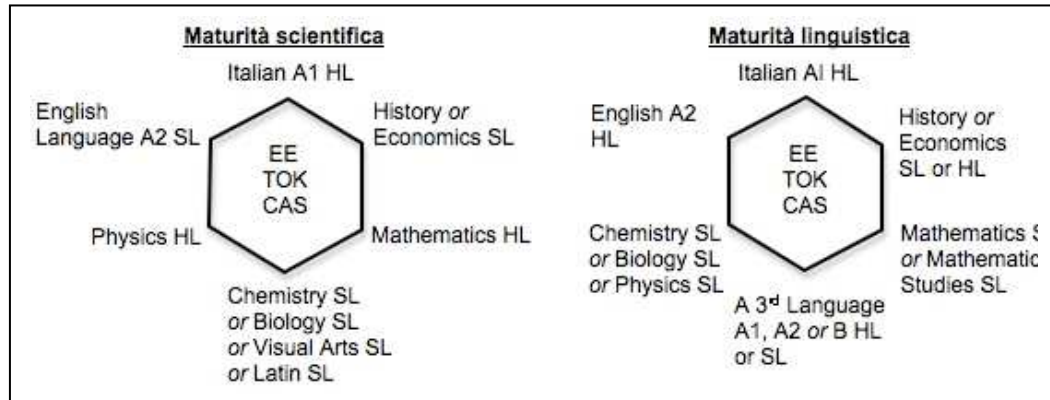
ENROLLMENT IN THE IB PROGRAMME

Parents and legal guardians of IB candidates in all IB categories (Anticipated, Diploma and Certificate) are required to read the General Regulations of the IB Diploma Programme (Appendix B). Since this is formal requirement imposed by the IBO on all IB World Schools, it is understood by St. Stephen's School that parents and legal guardians enrolling their children in our IB Programme have complied with this requirement and accept the conditions detailed therein.

**UNIVERSITY
RECOGNITION**

IB diploma holders gain admission to selective universities throughout the world. These include prominent institutions such as Oxford, Cambridge, Harvard, Yale, Heidelberg and Sorbonne. Formal agreements exist between the IBO and many ministries of education and private institutions

Italy: On October 23, 1992, the Italian Minister of Education signed a decree recognizing the International Baccalaureate diploma gained by St. Stephen's students and defining the IB equivalents of the **maturità scientifica** and the **maturità linguistica**, the only two forms of equivalence recognized. Students wishing to use the IB as a university entrance qualification in Italy must choose to follow a program in accord with one of the schemes below:



United Kingdom and Ireland: The IB Diploma has been accepted for admission purposes for many years. Except for Foundation Courses in certain universities, a full Diploma (not a collection of Certificates) is required. Offers of admission to a particular department within the given university will be made conditional upon the student's IB results. Offers are based either on total points, or on the results of the three subjects offered at Higher Level.

USA: The IB Diploma is not required for university entrance in the U.S. However, most universities have developed IB policies that include advanced placement, course credit, and special consideration at the time of admission. In some cases, a full year of university standing is awarded to IB Diploma holders. Recognizing the high standards of the IB Programme, admissions officers looked favorably on applicants enrolled in IB courses.

Canada: The IB Diploma is recognized throughout Canada as an admissions credential. Some of the most selective universities may require it for the admission of students who have been studying outside Canada. Many universities grant credit and/or advanced placement for students with Higher Level certificates.

**UNIVERSITY
RECOGNITION
(CONTINUED)**

Continental Europe: The IB Diploma is accepted by most European countries for entrance into their national universities. Some countries require that all exams be taken in the Diploma year. **Specific requirements exist for different university systems and university departments. This information should be obtained directly from the relevant Education Ministry or individual university.**

Japan: The IB Diploma is not required as an entrance qualification beyond the regular diploma awarded by St. Stephen's School. However, in the past, students have found that the additional work necessitated by the Diploma program has helped them in their university entrance exams and in demonstrating to universities their commitment to their studies.

Other Countries: The IB Diploma is recognized by universities in more than 65 countries worldwide. A complete list is available on the IBO's official website: www.ibo.org

Important references:

IB Handbook on University Recognition and Entrance
IB Recognition Policies of North American Universities

These can be found in the Library's IB reference section or in the College Counselor's office. To find out requirements in any given faculty in UK universities, students should consult The Official University and Colleges Admissions Services (www.ucas.com) and the specific university prospectus in the College Counselor's office. **Since policies sometimes change after the date of publication, students and parents should consult university admission offices directly.**

**THE IB AT
ST. STEPHEN'S**

In the current academic year (2008-9), there are 76 students enrolled in the IB program. Of these, 38 are Diploma candidates, 27 anticipating exams in the first year of their IB programme, and 11 taking certificates.

In May 2008, 40 St. Stephen's students took examinations for the International Baccalaureate Diploma, with 39 (98%) passing (The IB world average was 81%). An additional 7 students took examinations to receive certificates in two to three subject areas. There were 31 students anticipating exams in one or two Standard Level courses. The top mark of 7 was achieved on 54 exams; a score of 6 on 86 exams; a score of 5 on 87 exams; a score of 4 on 30 exams and a score of 3 on 22 exams. St. Stephen's School averages are above the IB world averages in 28 of the total 34 subject entries. Again, as in the past, these scores reflect thorough preparation and strong ability in all the disciplines.

The average total score of our candidates was 34 points and our top score was 44 points. 15% of our Diploma candidates scored 40 or above, 70% scored 30 points or above (the IB world average is known to be 29).

**DIPLOMA
BONUS POINTS**

Up to three bonus points can be awarded for combined performance in the Theory of Knowledge & Extended essay components of the Diploma Programme. Much of the groundwork for bonus points is done in year one, so it is important that junior IB students have clearly articulated goals and the strategies in place for achieving them. The Diploma Points Matrix (Appendix D) outlines the specific requirements for these three points.

**PLANNING A
COURSE OF
STUDY**

Students should take into account their future study and career plans. As previously mentioned, certain selections or omissions from the programme will limit study choices in some university systems. **Therefore, before they plan their IB programme, students should become familiar with the requirements and expectations of the universities in the country or countries to which they intend to apply. They should consult with the College Counselor for information about specific university requirements.**

**PROGRAM
CHOICE and
APPROVAL**

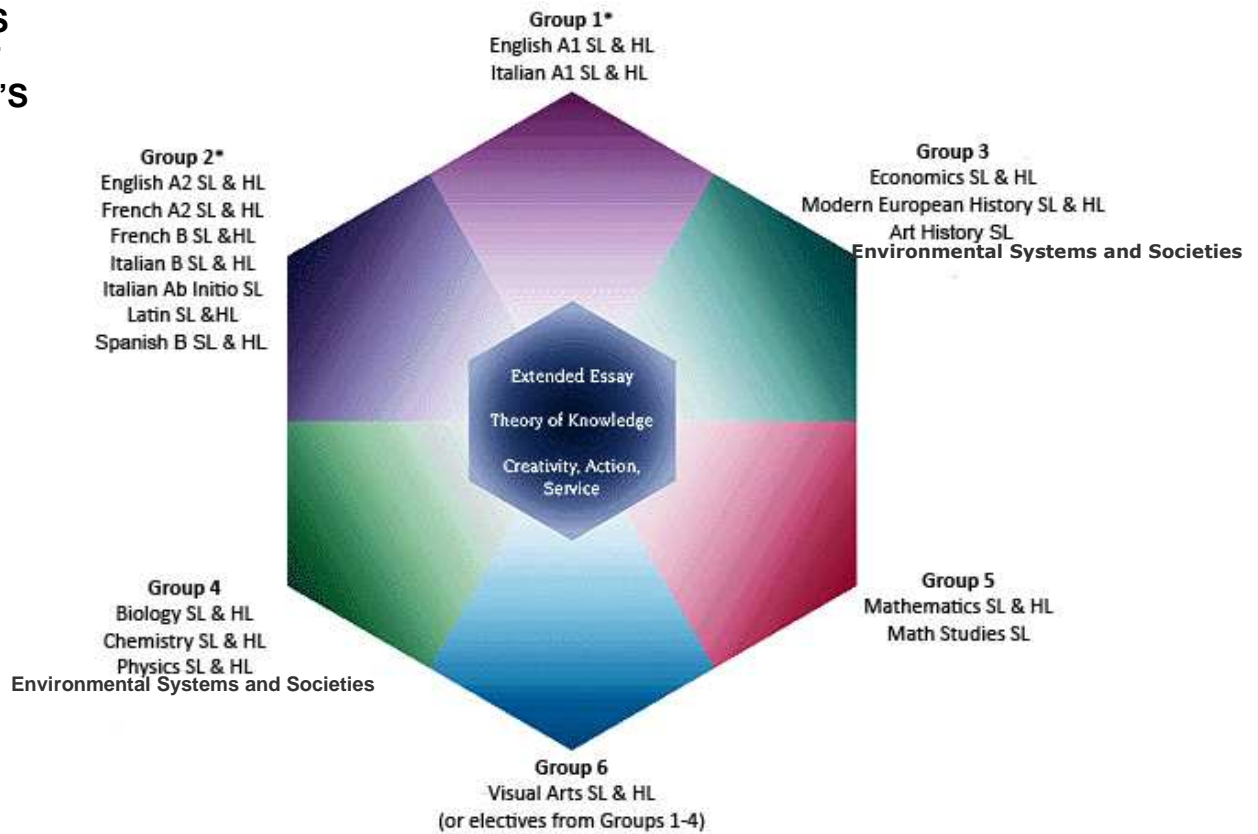
All students must consult the Director of Studies, the IB Coordinator and the College Counselor before making any final choices. The choice of courses and the levels of courses can often determine where, and in what subject areas, a student will be able to pursue further education.

In the second semester of grade 10, the Director of Studies, based on recommendations from grade 10 teachers, counsels students in choosing their IB Programme.

In general, the Director of Studies seeks to allow each student to pursue the courses that interest him or her. However, when the student's preparation or present level of achievement is in doubt, alternative courses or an extra year of preparation may be required. For group 2 Language courses, students should follow the guidelines outlined by the IB (Appendix C). The School reserves its right not to accept students into the Diploma program: the student may be permitted to take Certificates instead.

The students' choices for their IB Programme must be approved by the IB Coordinator, the College Counselor. Final approval must be obtained by the Director of Studies who draws up the student's IB Programme. Students interested in changing their IB Programme after it has been set by the Director of Studies, must submit a request form signed by the parents which then must be approved by the IB Coordinator, the College Counselor, and finally the Director of Studies. The IB Coordinator will finalize registrations in early October and the deadline for any program changes for IB candidates is set at November 15 of the second year of the IB Diploma.

**IB SUBJECTS
OFFERED AT
ST.STEPHEN'S
2009-2010***



*Pending IBO approval, Art History will be offered for the first time as an IB course at St. Stephen's School with first exams in 2011

**COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS**

Group 1 - Language A1

This course should be taken in the student's best language. It aims to develop students' skills in both critical reading and textual analysis of literary works, honing both oral and written expression. St. Stephen's School offers **English A1** and **Italian A1**. There are three assessed components in Language A1: World Literature essay(s), assessed externally for 20%, two internally assessed orals, worth 30% of final grade, and a written examination (commentary and essay) for 50%.

Students who have a best language other than English or Italian may study it if arrangements are made with the IB Coordinator and approved by the IBO. A qualified private tutor must be approved. As the IB requirements for World Literature and the Formal Oral Examinations are complex and demanding, students are encouraged to select a Language A1 taught at St. Stephen's School whenever possible.

Those students who have two languages at the A1 level and have a special interest in literature may study both as A1 languages. In this case, the second Language A1 may either replace a Group 2 language or serve as a Group Six subject. IB language placement is governed by strict guidelines and bi-lingual students are expected to pursue A1 studies in their mother tongue, especially if it is offered as part of the school curriculum.

Group 2 - Languages A2, B, Ab initio
(See Appendix C for IB placement guidelines)

- **Language A2** is a language and literature course for highly competent speakers of the language. St. Stephen's offers **English A2** and **French A2**. The English A1 and A2 course are the same in grade 11, but are taught separately in grade 12. French A2 is taught concurrently with French Language B
- **Language B** is a **foreign** language course for students with **some** previous experience of learning the language. Students taking B at Standard Level should know the basic grammar and be able to write and converse simply but correctly on topics of everyday life. The Modern Languages department offers **French B** and **Italian B** and **Spanish B** as a two-year sequence.
- The **Ab initio** level is for students who are just beginning a language. **French Ab initio** and **Italian Ab initio** are available. The **Ab initio** examination may not be taken in the first year and may only be taken at SL.
- **Latin** HL or SL is a valuable course for students interested in studying classical literature and humanities. The School has a tradition of Latin scholars who perform very well on both IB and national examinations.

**COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS
(CONTINUED)**

Group 3 - Individuals and Societies

The following Group 3 courses are offered: **History, Economics, Art History** (pending IBO approval).

Both History HL and SL classes study a selection of Twentieth Century World History Topics. At Higher Level students study one Regional Option (Europe 1789-1980) as well. History HL is a two-year course.

Economics is a two-year course preparing students for Standard and Higher level examinations. Students take either macroeconomics or microeconomics in their first year, followed by the other in their second year.

Art History offered at SL only is a Joint School Based Syllabus. This course will allow students to explore "historical, social and cultural perspectives on artistic production across and within particular societies". Exploring the rich heritage of art in Rome, students will have the opportunity to experience art first-hand while developing analytical skills and informed critical responses.

All Group 3 subjects require guided course work that accounts for approx. 25% of the overall mark. This course work is internally assessed and externally moderated by examiners appointed by the IBO.

**COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS
(CONTINUED)**

Group 4 - Experimental Sciences

The Group 4 subjects offered at St. Stephen's School are **Biology**, **Chemistry** and **Physics**, all of which may be taken at either Standard Level or Higher Level. The Higher Level sciences are advanced and rigorous courses intended to prepare students for university level study in the Sciences.

In the sciences, the student's IB mark is determined by internally assessed and externally moderated practical or laboratory work which accounts for 24% of the overall mark. In all IB Science courses, students are required to keep a laboratory notebook. In addition, each student must participate in an interdisciplinary Group 4 Project, completed in IB year one.

Group 5 - Mathematics

There are three Group 5 courses offered at St. Stephen's School: **Mathematics** Higher Level or Standard Level and **Mathematical Studies** at Standard Level.

□ **Mathematics HL**

Mathematics HL is designed for students with a good background in mathematics that 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 physics, engineering and technology. Others may take this subject because they have a strong interest in mathematics and enjoy meeting its challenges.

The internally assessed component, the portfolio, offers students a framework for developing independence in their mathematical investigation, extended closed-problem solving and mathematical modeling.

**COURSE
DESCRIPTIONS
(CONTINUED)**

Group 5 - Mathematics (continued):

□ **Mathematics SL**

Mathematics SL is designed for students who anticipate a need for a sound mathematical background in preparation for their future studies.

Students embarking on this course require a good knowledge of basic concepts and to be equipped with the skills needed to apply simple mathematical techniques correctly. This demanding course contains a broad range of mathematical topics. There is also an internally assessed portfolio.

Students most likely to select this subject will be those who expect to go on to subjects that have a significant mathematical content, for example, Chemistry, Economics, Geography, Psychology and Business Administration.

□ **Mathematical Studies SL**

Mathematical Studies SL is designed for students with varied backgrounds and abilities. 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. Students embarking on this course need to be equipped with fundamental skills and a rudimentary knowledge of basic processes.

The internally assessed component, the project, is a piece of written work based on personal research, guided and supervised by the teacher.

Students most likely to select this Group 5 option are those whose main interests lie outside the field of mathematics, and for many mathematical students this will be their last formal mathematics course.

Group 6 - Visual Arts and Electives

A Diploma candidate at St. Stephen's School may fulfill the Group 6 requirement by taking **Visual Arts (HL or SL)** or a second course from any of Groups 1-4

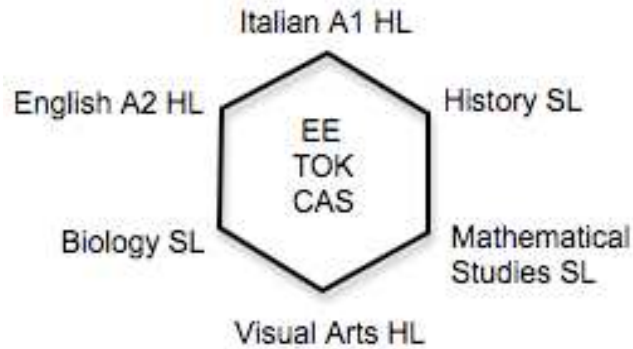
The **Visual Arts** course allows students the chance to engage in studio work. In addition, they must keep a Research Workbook throughout the course that allows them to demonstrate how their research has led them to an understanding of topics or concepts that they are exploring in their own work. The student's IB mark is determined by teacher assessment of studio work, the Research Workbook, and a discussion about the candidate's work conducted by a visiting IB examiner.

CONCURRENCY Only two SL examinations may be anticipated in the first year. All anticipated exams can be retaken in the Diploma year if necessary. Many students will take all six subjects in the second year. Highly motivated students may take extra certificates.

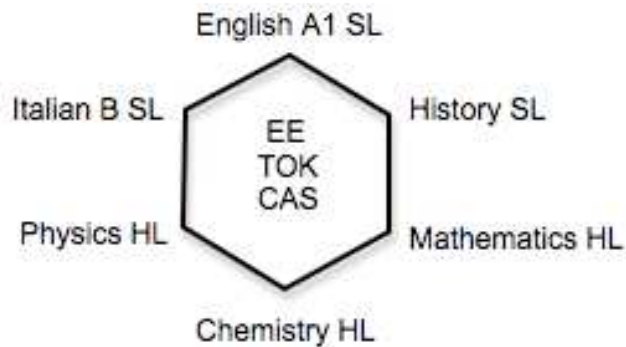
SAMPLE PROGRAMS

Below are several programs that could be followed by a Diploma Candidate at St. Stephen's School. They are offered only as illustrations of the range of possibilities.

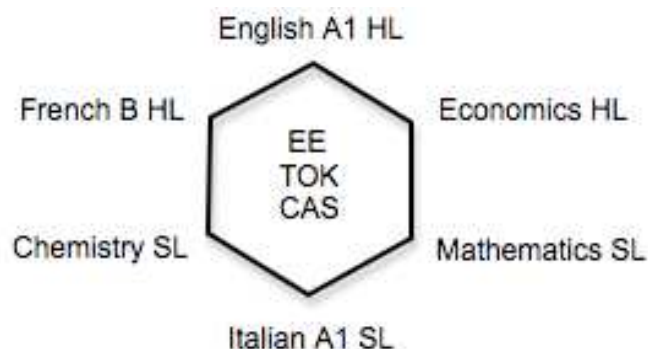
1. A student whose best language is Italian with strong English, interested in Art and humanities:



2. A student whose best language is English and whose strength is in the Sciences:



3. A student with equal strength in two languages, interested in languages and business:



N.B. Italian nationals who wish to have their IB Diplomas recognized by the Italian government are required to follow one of the two programmes outlined on page 5, unless they qualify for exemption (equivolenza)

**CREATIVITY
ACTION
SERVICE**

CAS is an integral part of the IB Diploma. The IB Organization recognizes that significant educational experiences also take place outside of the classroom. Social responsibility and the willingness to be of service to the community are seen as important complements to the academic and intellectual development of the student.

The CAS program at St. Stephen's School continues throughout the Diploma years. Each student develops a CAS plan in consultation with the CAS Coordinator.

Students fulfill these requirements by combining participation in electives and extracurricular activities offered at the school with service to the school community or to the outside community. Students may begin activities to be included in the CAS requirement during the summer prior to the first year of the IB Program. Each student is required to keep a record and write a self-evaluation for each activity in each of the three areas: creativity, action and service.

**THEORY OF
KNOWLEDGE**

Theory of Knowledge (ToK) is obligatory for every candidate, as it is the key element in the educational philosophy of the IB Diploma. This course is not a study of the history of philosophy; its purpose is to stimulate critical reflection upon the diverse ways of knowing and areas of knowledge in order to consider the role which knowledge plays in a global society. Theory of Knowledge encourages students to become aware of themselves as thinkers, to become aware of the complexity of knowledge, and to recognize the need to act responsibly in an interconnected world.

Each student is required to produce one formal essay and one oral presentation on topics related to the course. The essay is written at the end of the course and evaluated by an examiner appointed by the IBO. The presentation is assessed by the ToK teacher according to assessment criteria provided by the IBO. In combination with the grade given for the Extended Essay, up to three Diploma Bonus Points may be awarded on the basis of this work.

EXTENDED ESSAY

The International Baccalaureate Organization defines the Extended Essay as "an in-depth study of a limited topic within a subject". This 4000-word essay provides students with the opportunity to conduct independent research at a pre-college level. In general, the skills required to produce a successful essay in any given subject are those the student has been using in the relevant course, plus initiative, enthusiasm and a spirit of intellectual inquiry.

The student should choose to work in the area he or she finds most interesting or relevant, and possibly in an area of strength. For example, students choosing history must be interested in working with primary sources. Those selecting a science topic are advised to undertake experiment-based investigations, rather than library-based surveys. For an Extended Essay in Language A, students should be interested in the independent critical analysis of literary works, whereas in Language B, language/culture can be the focus.

The IBO requires that a teacher from the School faculty supervise the student during the process.

In the beginning of the Spring semester of the first year, the IB Coordinator leads an extended essay seminar that introduces the principles of academic research. Students then choose a topic and a supervisor and begin to discuss the research question and resources with him/her. There are a series of deadlines for this process. Students must choose a supervisor and have an approved topic by the second week in February. In early March, students must submit a 250-word introduction, outline, research plan, including a bibliography. By the end of April, the student must submit a 3000-word draft of the Extended Essay. Over the summer, students have the opportunity to write a 4000-word draft which is submitted to the supervisor upon returning to school in September of the second year. The final draft is due in late September.

In cases where the Extended Essay is not completed by that deadline, the student may not be permitted to register as an IB Diploma candidate and may be limited to IB Certificates instead.

The Extended Essay is sent to IB Examiners who evaluate the work. In conjunction with Theory of Knowledge, up to three Diploma Bonus Points may be awarded for the Extended Essay. An essential reference that should be consulted before work begins on the Essay is *The Extended Essay Guidelines* to be found in the St. Stephen's Library and on-line on the library network. The St. Stephen's School Style sheet is also an essential reference document for presentation and formatting requirements. Each student has an individual account, through the school, to Questia (www.questia.com), an excellent independent study research tool.

DEADLINES	Deadlines set by the St. Stephen's School are recognized by the IBO as examination requirements. Coursework, ToK essays and Extended Essays must be sent to a specific examiner as a class set. Failure to submit the required work to the examiner by the deadline results in no grade in that subject or a failing condition for the IB Diploma. The Deadlines and Dates Calendar is set for the year 2008-09 and can be found on the SSS website. The 2009-10 Deadlines and Dates Calendar will be set by the beginning of September 2010 and will be posted on the website. A hard copy is also posted in the Cortile on the IB Notice Board.
ACADEMIC HONESTY	Students are expected to respect IB deadlines and guidelines relating to academic practices. The IB coordinator briefs all students on IB policy regarding academic infringements and malpractice (see Section VII E of the <i>General Regulations</i> – Appendix B). This is also available on the SSS website as part of the IB Handbook. Students and parents are expected to sign a statement that they have read and agreed to the regulations. When a potential incident relating to academic malpractice or infringement occurs during the course, the IB Coordinator will keep a record of the details for future reference, should the need arise. St. Stephen's School ensures that all students are familiar with the need to cite appropriately and approach their studies ethically and with integrity. The school subscribes to a plagiarism prevention service and all IB candidates are required to submit electronic copies of externally assessed papers before submission to the examiner.
STUDENT SUPPORT	The IB Coordinator is available to advise students and parents at any time on matters pertaining to the IB. In addition, every student at St. Stephen's School chooses a faculty advisor. Students meet regularly with their advisors throughout the year, and in this way are monitored and supported in meeting deadlines, helped to coordinate the curricular with the extracurricular, and assisted in establishing priorities. The Advisor will inform the IB Coordinator and the Director of Studies of serious unresolved academic problems, or vice versa. Students should see it as their responsibility to maintain positive and open communications with their advisors.
MOCK EXAMINATIONS	Most teachers feel it is advantageous for students to sit mock exams. These are taken in March, either during lessons or on Saturdays, and are intended to give students some practice with the exam formats. They are also intended to help students recognize their strengths and weaknesses before they attempt the real exams in May, and may provide the basis for the teacher's final predicted grades and/or semester grades.

RESULTS The IBO issues PIN access codes to enable students to access their own results in July. Results can be accessed by the IB Coordinator at the same time. The official IB transcript is sent to the school at the end of August. Students should collect their transcripts from the registrar. During April, students should complete forms requesting that their results be transmitted electronically to the university or college of their choice. This helps to expedite the acceptance process for UCAS applicants, and is a requirement for most North American colleges.

GRADES IB grades in individual subjects are awarded on a scale of 1 to 7:

7	Excellent	6	Very Good	5	Good		
4	Satisfactory	3	Mediocre	2	Poor	1	Very Poor

The maximum Diploma score is 45 points. 24 points usually constitute the minimum passing condition. However, to receive the Diploma, students must also achieve a better than "Elementary" grade on the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge, and must compensate for 3 in one Higher Level with a 5 in another, as a minimum of 12 points at HL is required for the award of the Diploma. See *General Regulations* (Appendix B) for further details.

ENQUIRY UPON RESULTS When the teacher and student both feel that the mark awarded is significantly below the expected result for the subject, the IB Coordinator can request an Enquiry upon Results. On rare occasions, the mark awarded may be altered, raised or lowered, as a result of this enquiry. Where this is not the case, the IB assesses a fee for this service.

LEGALIZATION Students from some countries will need to complete the appropriate forms to notify the IBO of the need for legalization documents to be processed in order for their IB Diploma to be accepted in their home countries. Students requiring this service are requested to notify the IB Coordinator before the final exam session begins. The IBO in Geneva contacts the appropriate embassy to complete this legalization process. There is an additional fee for this service. A list of countries where legalization is required can be found on the IBO website.

USEFUL ADDRESSES AND REFERENCES **The International Baccalaureate Organization** on the World Wide Web: <http://www.ibo.org>

St. Stephen's School

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Director of Studies: directorstudies@ststephens-rome.com

IB Coordinator: ib.coordinator@ststephens-rome.com

College Counselor: college.counselor@ststephens-rome.com