



# An Introduction to the International Baccalaureate

“The best exam route to university”  
(Financial Times)

“The multidisciplinary diploma that is fast becoming a favoured option for academically gifted students” (The Independent)

“This course should be compulsory in all schools in the world”  
(The Guardian)

"There's no doubt that university admissions officers now regard IB as a preferred option," (The Independent – based on survey of higher education admissions officers)

## Bilborough College – An IB World School

Bilborough College is now authorised as an IB World School.

This leaflet aims to answer some of the questions you might have about the Diploma and what it involves.



### Is the IB for me?

Are you an internationally-minded person who would like to make the most of global opportunities?

Do you think that you would like to keep up a wide range of subject options rather than going down to just 4 AS levels?

Do you wish to have your non-academic achievements such as music, dance, drama, sport and voluntary work rewarded?

Do you want to take a qualification which is highly regarded not only by the top UK universities and employers but by higher education institutions and companies around the world?

If so, the IB could be for you. There are more than 626,000 IB students at 2337 schools in 128 countries around the world. At Bilborough, you could become one of them.

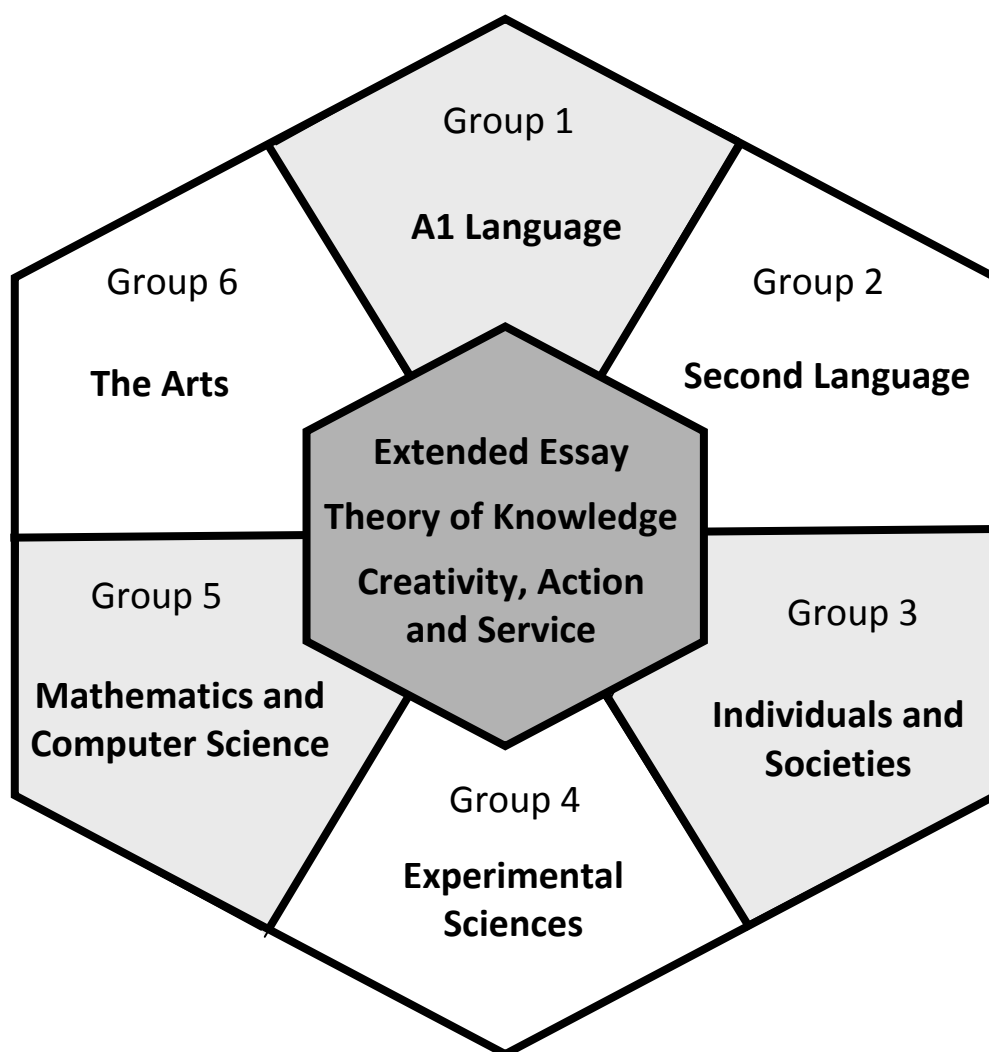


## What is the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma?

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme is a two year programme of study taken in the sixth form and is a qualification for university entry. The difference from A levels is that you study 6 subjects and also meet three other requirements in order to be awarded the Diploma.

Everyone studies the core elements (Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge and Creativity, Action and Service).

Students must pick subjects in each of the 6 blocks although they can opt out of group 6 if they wish.



## What subjects can I choose at Bilborough College?

We have tried to offer a wide range of subjects to appeal to as many students as possible

Notes:

1. You must apply for **3 subjects at Higher Level (HL)** and **3 subjects at Standard Level (SL)**.
2. You can opt out of Group 6 (the Arts) and take a second subject from any of the other groups.
3. If you have not previously studied a language (or would like to start a new one) you can study ab initio Spanish which is for beginners with no prior knowledge of the language.
4. If you opt for Environmental Systems and Societies this can count as a group 3 subject or a group 4 subject or it can count for both group 3 and group 4 (if you wish to do 2 languages or 2 arts subjects for example)

Group	Subjects
First Language	English SL and HL
Second Language	French SL and HL German SL and HL Spanish SL and HL Spanish ab initio (SL)  Self-study native language (SL and HL)
Individuals and Societies	History SL and HL Economics SL and HL Environmental Systems and Societies SL
Experimental Sciences	Biology SL and HL Chemistry SL and HL Physics SL and HL Environmental Systems and Societies SL
Mathematics	Maths SL and HL Maths Studies (SL)
The Arts	Film (SL and HL) Theatre (SL and HL) Art (SL and HL) Extra option from groups 1-5





## Theory of Knowledge

- Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is central to the philosophy and teaching of the International Baccalaureate Organisation, and is internally and externally assessed.
- The sort of questions you might consider while following this course are ‘can we think without language?’ and ‘is it possible for me to hold a different opinion from someone else and for us both to be right?’
- Assessment is by one essay of 1200 -1600 words and one short presentation to the class. Your essay title will be chosen from a substantial list provided by the IBO at the beginning of the second year.

## Creativity, Action and Service

- Creativity, Action, Service (CAS) provides balance to our academic studies involving you in activities outside the classroom. The idea is to challenge you and help you to develop awareness, concern and the ability to work with others.
- Activities can vary widely; they may include playing a musical instrument in a group, taking part in sports events, organising community projects or teaching a skill to young children.
- As well as doing the activities you will be expected to keep a journal, so that you can reflect on the activities and what they have taught you.
- Over the two years you will be expected to carry out a minimum of 150 hours of CAS activities.

## The extended essay

- The extended essay offers you the opportunity to carry out independent research on a subject of special interest to you, chosen from one of the six subject areas.
- This is likely to involve experimental or library-based research. You will be allocated a supervisor who will spend 3-5 hours of one-to-one time with you to help you to plan and research your essay.
- The essay should be about 4000 words long and is externally assessed.

## Other useful information

### Entry requirements

- All students need to get a minimum of 5 grades A\*-C at GCSE including Maths and English.
- Students will need at least a B in higher level subjects where these have been studied before.
- To be successful on the Diploma programme you will also need to be intellectually curious, willing to work and think independently, and interested in the world beyond yourself and the classroom. You will need to be well organised and committed to your studies. Motivation and enthusiasm are essential requirements.

### Examinations and Grades

- Unlike A levels, all examinations are taken in May of the second year so there are no modular exams.
- Like A Levels, all courses have some degree of coursework and Internal Assessment to spread the workload.
- Each of the six subjects is marked out of 7 to give a possible total of 42 subject points. A further 3 marks in total are awarded for Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay. Therefore the maximum score in the diploma is 45 points. A diploma is awarded to those students who get at least 24 points and complete the Creativity, Action and Service component.
- Retakes are only possible in the November after the course has been completed

### Teaching time

- Under Bilborough's current timetable, students receive four hours thirty minutes of teaching for each AS/A-level subject per week, and generally an hour or more for enrichment activities.
- IB Diploma students will receive four hours thirty minutes for each higher level subject, and 2 hours fifteen minutes for each standard level subject and for ToK.
- Students must complete at least 150 hours of CAS over the two years although these may be outside the timetable and often will not involve teaching.



## Universities and the IB

- The International Baccalaureate Diploma programme is accepted by all UK universities.
- UCAS (the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service) now provides a measure of how IB compares to A-levels.
- Three A grades at A level is equivalent to 360 UCAS points (A=120, B=100, C=80, D=60, E=40)
- For comparison the tariff awards 768 points to the top IB score of 45 (equal to more than 6 A grades).
- A more common IB score of 32 attracts 466 points, better than AAAB.
- This level of equivalence indicates the worth attached not only to the individual IB subjects but also to the core elements of CAS, ToK and extended essay. In other words it is recognising both the depth and the breadth of the IB.



### What kind of offers to universities usually make?

All of these offers were made for courses during the current academic year.

University	Degree course	IB Offer
Bath	Physics	Total 30 5 in Maths and Physics HL
Birmingham	English and History	Total 30 6 in HL English
Cambridge	Medicine	Total 39 19 in total at HL (6/6/7)
Exeter	French	Total 30 No subject specifications
Liverpool	Physiotherapy	Total 30 No subject specifications
Leeds	Archaeology and English	Total 29 No subject specifications
Nottingham	Computer Science	Total 30 5 in Maths and English
Oxford	Chemistry	Total 39 6 in Chemistry and Maths HL
Warwick	History	Total 38 6 in HL History

## Where can I find out more?

To find out more about the International Baccalaureate Organisation, its philosophy and principles, take a look at its website, [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)

To find out more about Bilborough College, including information regarding the Diploma programme at the College, see our website course information pages –  
[www.bilborough.ac.uk](http://www.bilborough.ac.uk)

If you would like to talk to someone at the College about the programme, please contact our IB co-ordinator

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