

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme at Diocesan



Be more than you ever imagined

Broad **Rigorous Assessment**
 Balanced
 Inquiry **Community Service**
 Reflection **Flexible**
 CriticalThinking
 Develops **Research** Skills
Choice within structure
Pre-University

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The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme is an academically-challenging and balanced programme of education that works to develop students who live, learn and work in a rapidly changing world. With a focus on independent thinking, academic rigour, community service, inter-cultural understanding and respect for others, the programme prepares students for success at university and beyond.

IB Diploma Programme at a glance

- All Year 12 students can enter. It is not limited to students who achieve highly.
- It is taught over two years with final examinations held at the end of Year 13. Students can also take NZQA scholarship exams.
- The students select one subject from each of the six subject groups, with some variation possible, within these choices: Studies in Language and Literature, Language Acquisition, Individuals and Societies, Sciences, Mathematics, The Arts.
- Three subjects are studied at a higher level and the remainder are studied at a standard level. While both are two-year courses, higher level has more content and requires deeper thinking.
- Each subject includes at least 20% internal assessment.



“I will never regret taking the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. The IB syllabus constantly challenged me to think holistically and cross culturally, stretching my mind further than ever before. After the programme I feel much more confident as an independent student, thinker and writer and so far have found myself very well prepared for university.”

IB Diploma Programme students have proven time management skills

You apply effective study habits and organised time management to further education and the workplace.

It encourages breadth and depth of learning

You are able to choose courses from six subject groups and study subjects at different levels

IB Students care about more than just results

Through creativity, activity and service (CAS) you learn outside the classroom and develop emotionally and ethically as well as intellectually

The IB Diploma Programme encourages critical thinking

Learn how to analyse and evaluate issues, generate ideas and consider new perspectives

Graduates are globally minded

Language classes encourage an international mindset, key for increasingly globalised societies

It's an International qualification

The DP is recognised globally by universities and employers

It assesses more than just exam techniques

Learn to understand, not just memorise facts or topics and prepare for exams

It encourages you to become a confident and independent learner

For example, the extended essay requires independent research through an in-depth study

It increases academic opportunity

Research shows that DP graduates are much more likely to be enrolled in higher education institutions than students holding other qualifications

Subjects are not taught in isolation

Theory of knowledge (TOK) classes encourage you to make connections between subjects and to understand how knowledge is created

What is the International Baccalaureate?

The International Baccalaureate is a non-profit educational foundation focused on the student. Founded in 1968, they currently work with over 5,900 schools in 160 countries to develop and offer challenging programmes to over 1.95 million students aged 3 to 19 years.

The IB Mission

“The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. To this end the organisation works with schools, governments and international organisations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. The IB programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences can also be right”.

The benefits of the IB Diploma Programme

- A world class qualification which is recognised internationally
- Provides students a careful balance of subject breadth and depth
- Addresses the nature of knowledge across disciplines through the unique Theory of Knowledge course
- Encourages international-mindedness, including a foundation in the student's first language and culture and in a second language
- Develops a positive attitude to learning that prepares students for university education
- Offers a strong reputation for its rigorous external assessment with published global standards. This qualification is welcomed by universities worldwide
- Emphasises the development of the whole student – physically, intellectually, emotionally and ethically.

**GROUP 2
Language Acquisition**

- English B
- French Ab Initio
- French B
- Japanese B
- Chinese B
- German B
- Latin B
- Spanish B

**GROUP 1
Language and Literature**

- English A Literature
- English A Language and Literature
- Chinese A Literature

**GROUP 3
Individuals and Societies**

- Economics
- Geography
- History
- Psychology

**GROUP 5
Mathematics**

- Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches
- Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation

**GROUP 4
Experimental Sciences**

- Physics
- Biology
- Chemistry

GROUP 6 Arts

- Dance
- Film
- Music
- Theatre Studies
- Visual Arts



Curriculum

In the Diploma Programme you will choose one subject from each of Groups 1-5. One of these will be your best language – studied with a focus on literature – while the other four groups encompass one other language, the social sciences, the experimental sciences and mathematics. You will also pick one more subject: either an arts subject from Group 6, or a second subject from Groups 2-4.

Three of these subjects are taken at Higher level, while your other subjects are studied at Standard level.

Core requirements

There are three core elements to the Diploma Programme that will broaden your educational experience and challenge you to apply your knowledge and skills.

Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS) requires students to take part in a range of non-academic experiences. These should involve personal challenge and real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes. The creativity component encourages engagement in the arts and creative thinking. Activity helps develop a healthy lifestyle through physical activity. Finally, service with the community offers very different learnings that students will find valuable academically.

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Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is a course on critical thinking, providing an opportunity for students to reflect on the nature of knowledge, and on how we know what we claim to know. As a thoughtful and purposeful inquiry into different ways of knowing, and into different kinds of knowledge, TOK is composed almost entirely of questions. The most central of these is “How do we know?”

Through discussions, students gain greater awareness of their personal and ideological assumptions, as well as developing an appreciation of the diversity and richness of cultural perspectives.

TOK comprises of an essay responding to one of six essay prompts and a presentation made either as an individual or in a group of up to three.

The **Extended Essay (EE)** is an independent, self-directed piece of research, finishing with a 4,000-word paper. It provides practical preparation for undergraduate research and an opportunity for students to investigate a topic of special interest to them, which is also related to one of the student's six Diploma subjects.

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A natural progression

For those who have been studying at Dio throughout their younger years, the IB Diploma Programme is the natural progression of a familiar curriculum.

The style of learning in the Diploma Programme will follow an accustomed format for those who have been through the Primary Years Programme (PYP) in Junior School, and Middle Years Programme (MYP) in our Junior High School.

Assessment

There are two types of assessment in the Diploma Programme - internal and external assessment.

During the two years of the Diploma, students will undertake internally assessed components of the programme at Diocesan. This will typically contribute 20% to 25% of the final mark. At the end of the Diploma, you will take final written exams which are marked by external examiners.

The points awarded for each subject ranges from one (lowest) to seven (highest), giving a possible total of 42 points. Results in TOK and the Extended Essay make up the other three points, bringing the maximum points obtainable to 45.

Students will be awarded the Diploma if they gain 24 points (subject to minimum levels of performance across the programme and satisfactory CAS completion).

Results are determined by performance against set standards, rather than being scaled depending on the performance of other students.

FAQs

“What if I want to do pre-Med and need to take three Sciences?”

You can study three sciences but no University in New Zealand or Australia requires the study of three Science subjects at school for entry into pre-Med/first year Health Science courses. Consult the Careers Centre for further details.

“What if I don’t want to take an Arts subject?”

The ‘Arts’ subject can be replaced by another subject from the Science, Social Science or Language groups. Consult the Careers Centre for further details.

“Isn’t the IB Diploma Programme only for the smart people?”

Over 5,900 schools in 160 countries around the world offer the IB Diploma Programme. Many of these schools offer ONLY the IB Diploma Programme and not a local or national qualification. It is a qualification that is accessible to everyone.

“Will I have time to do all the Co-curricular activities that I want to do? I’ve heard the IB Diploma Programme is too much work.”

Time management, prioritising and learning how to do these things form part of the Approaches to Learning that underpin the philosophy of the Diploma Programme. These are the soft skills that students need at University and in life in general. All the Diploma girls are involved in Co-curricular activities. In fact, CAS requires them to do this. In this way, Co-curricular activities become validated within the Diploma Programme and the skills that enable students to be successful in them are taught explicitly.

“Do I have to take a language? I am hopeless at languages and I’ve heard I have to take a language to do the IB Diploma Programme.”

It is true that you must study a language to take the Diploma. The language acquisition subject contributes to the international mindedness aspect of the course.

“What if I dropped my language in Year 10. Can I still do the Diploma?”

Diocesan offers French as an ‘ab initio’ language. This is a beginners’ course that assumes no prior knowledge. This means that students who are not currently studying a language can opt for this course and meet the requirements of the Diploma.

“Can I take Chinese instead of English for Group 1? English is not my first language so I would find it too hard to do English literature.”

Diocesan offers a Chinese literature course as well as an English literature course. Students who have spent the majority of their schooling in an environment where the medium of instruction was Chinese can opt for the Chinese literature course. This also provides these students with the added benefit of graduating with a Bilingual Diploma (students who gain a grade 3 or higher in studies in language and literature and a grade 3 or higher in an individuals and societies or science subject, completed in a different language, will receive the Bilingual Diploma.)

“Isn’t the workload for the Diploma so much more than for NCEA?”

‘Passing’ the Diploma and ‘passing’ Level 3 NCEA require similar levels of commitment. Obtaining the Diploma with a high score and getting NCEA Level 3 with Excellence endorsement require similar levels of commitment. Because the Diploma is a two year programme, a significant level of support is in place to ensure students are equipped to achieve at the highest level:

- One-on-one mentoring and guidance meetings are offered for every student with the DP Coordinator.
- DP Assemblies take place to address DP specific matters.
- Managebac (the DioConnect for the Diploma), enables students to access the assessment calendar, DP specific resources and documents at the click of a button.
- Diploma classes tend to be smaller, allowing for individualised learning.

“Is there internal assessment in the Diploma? I’ve heard it all rests on the exams at the end of the second year.”

Every subject has at least 20% internal assessment. The examinations for each subject are split into papers which are sat across two or three days, reducing the need to ‘peak’ on just one occasion.

“I really like the self-led aspect of the DP, where you choose your own topics and research questions for internals. I’m also really enjoying the discussions we have in TOK lessons and hearing everyone’s opinions and ideas.”

“I like the smaller class sizes because it feels like classes are more connected and engaged.”

“The DP is teaching me how to learn and enjoy that process.”

“I’m really enjoying having no internals right now ~ All the NCEA girls are studying for those individual internals, but we are actually learning a lot more.”



Leer Mao, 2025 IB Diploma Dux

What's the difference between Standard and Higher levels?

Standard level (SL) subjects involve approximately 150 hours of teaching time over the two years. Higher level (HL) subjects, of which you must take three, take 240 hours of teaching time.

You should choose your three best and most liked subjects for HL.

What's the difference between the IB Diploma Programme and NCEA?

NCEA	IB Diploma
External examinations in Year 12 and Year 13	External examinations in Year 13 only
Internal assessment takes place in Year 12 (Level 2) and Year 13 (Level 3)	Internal assessment takes place across the two years of the Diploma
Content is covered and assessed in 'chunks'	Content is learnt, assimilated and applied in new contexts across a period of time
Endorsements in course and subject	Subjects are studied at Higher level and Standard level
80 credits minimum (120 credits norm) at each level. Each subject offers about 20 credits	24 points needed to gain the Diploma out of a possible 45. Each subject is worth 7 points (plus 3 points for TOK, EE, CAS)



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