

GNS IB Diploma Programme Prospectus



The IB Advantage, According to the World's Finest Universities

"IB is well known to us as excellent preparation. Success in an IB programme correlates well with success at Harvard. We are pleased to see the credential of the IB Diploma Programme on the transcript."

Marlyn McGrath Lewis,
Assistant Dean of Admissions,
Harvard University

"I have always been a supporter of the International Baccalaureate. It is a thoughtful and genuinely intellectual curriculum with an unusually high degree of integrity and connectedness. There is no other curriculum anywhere that does a superior job of both educating students and inspiring a true and broad-based love of learning."

William Shain, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Vanderbilt University

"In first year, IB Graduates' marks were 12 to 13 per cent above the average, but even more impressive were the students who had accepted a first-year credit and gone straight into the second year. They were still scoring from 7 to 12 per cent above the average. They were outperforming students who had already spent a year in university."

Martha Piper, Former President,
University of British Columbia

"McGill has enthusiastically recruited IB students for over two decades. Even today, when reviewing an application from an IB Diploma candidate...our admissions officers can be assured of the candidate's strong and broad-based academic preparation. We have seen that IB students embrace the rigorous academic challenges of university life and perform well in their McGill programmes. As a member of the College and University Recognition Taskforce, I can attest to the respect position the IB Diploma at prestigious universities throughout North America."

Kim Bartlett, Director of Admissions, McGill University

"Highly selective colleges and universities are looking for students who take the most challenging courses available to them. The IB programme is notable not just for the rigor of its individual classes, but for the thoughtful integration of the entire programme. Students who complete the IB Diploma are the kind of smart, intellectually curious, and creative students who excel at top universities."

Brandon R. Clarke, Former Admission Director, Stanford University

GNS IB Diploma Statistics

Class of	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016
GNS AVG.(/45)*	34.0	34.0	33.0	30.4	35.0
WORLD AVG.	29.9	29.9	29.8	30.0	30.1

AVERAGE PASS RATE		5 YR AVERAGE DIPLOMA SCORE		AVERAGE SUBJECT SCORE	
GNS	94%	GNS	33.8/45	GNS	5.28/7
WORLD	79%	WORLD	29.9/45	WORLD	4.8/7

* **How do IB scores affect university admissions?** Many universities actively seek out IB Diploma students because of their impressive track record in post secondary studies. Because the IB Diploma is assessed on an international standard, it is ideal for students applying to universities both throughout Canada and around the world.

“The rigor of the IB Diploma requirements meet our recommendation for the strongest high school preparation possible. The Extended Essay echoes William & Mary’s belief in the value of original research as well as the College’s emphasis on strong writing skills, and the Theory of Knowledge course fosters active and critical learning and is philosophically akin to the goals of our freshman seminar program. The CAS component answers our call for students who have been exposed to community service and creative endeavors and who understand the importance of developing the whole person. In sum, the IB Diploma candidate who has met the challenge successfully receives strong consideration from the William & Mary admission committee.”

Allison Jesse, former Dean of Admissions, William & Mary

“When we make decisions on the borderline, we would be likely to make the offer to an IB student and not the A-level student. The IB differentiates better than A-level.”

Geoff Parks, Director of Admissions, Cambridge University

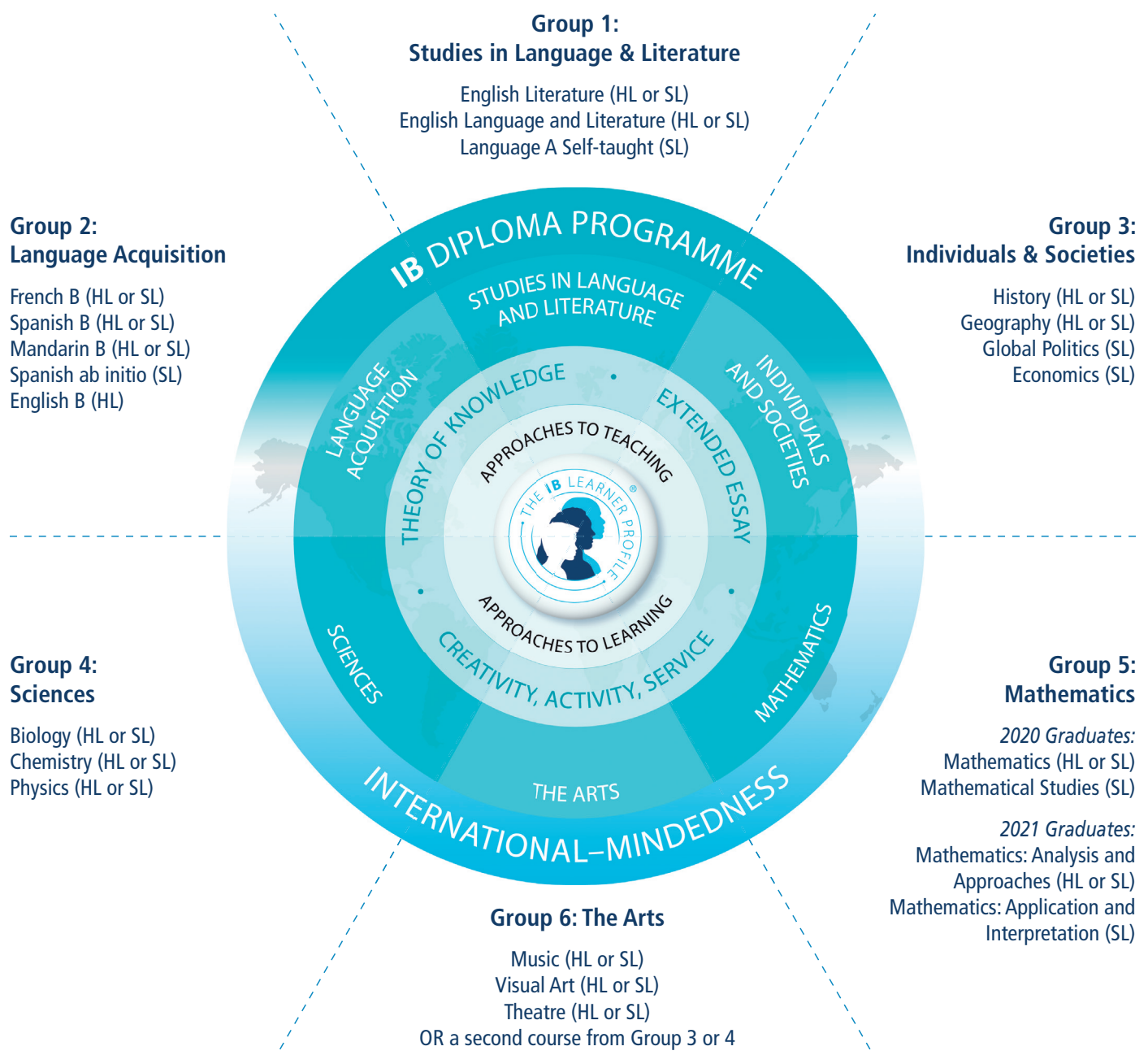
“The IB is a first-rate program, and it prepares students very well for a university like ours.”

Fred Hargadon, Director of Undergraduate Admissions, Princeton University

What is the IB at GNS?

GNS became an IB World School in 1996 when it was authorized to offer the IB Diploma Programme. With the implementation of the Middle and Primary Years Programs, we now offer a continuum of the International Baccalaureate programmes from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12. The modern, inquiry-based curricula help develop each student's intellectual, personal, emotional and social skills, allowing them to thrive in a rapidly globalizing world. At the heart of the IB mission and learner profile is the wisdom that education must prepare students for more than the workforce; it must prepare students to be committed, creative and compassionate citizens of the world.

Diploma Programme Curriculum Framework at GNS



Commonly-Asked Questions About the IB

“Is the IB a new phenomenon?”

Relatively.

The IB was founded in 1968. The number of IB schools around the world currently is growing all the time. In February 2018, there were 6,311 programmes being offered worldwide, across 4,786 schools. GNS is one of fifteen Continuum IB Schools in Canada offering three IB programmes (PYP, MYP and Diploma).

“Do universities understand it?”

Yes.

1,000 of Oxford University’s applicants for 2012 were IB students.

Most top Canadian universities give first year credit for a 5/7 result (and treat it as if you earned 86%). At the University of Victoria, a 4/7 result (which the BC Ministry of Education treats as a B) gives you First Year English Credit.

Most top American universities ask a simple question when considering admissions: “Is the candidate enrolled in the most rigorous program available?” IB is the most rigorous high school academic curriculum in the world.

“What are the long-term benefits of taking the Diploma?”

- it is a lifelong credential that is equally impressive to graduate programs and employers
- it speaks volumes about the work ethic and character of a student who achieves the Diploma
- the word of the moment, in the admissions hallways of the world’s top universities, is “grit”—which IB students have in abundance
- nobody claims it is easy, but most claim that it is “totally worth it”

“Will I be able to handle it?”

If, during their course of studies, Diploma students ever find themselves in ‘crisis mode,’ it is for two reasons:

- they have not prioritized academic work
- they have not been organized

After the fact, our IB graduates say “I wasn’t sure that I could do it.” But after they did, *it made them more confident and more able to face the next challenge.*

“Will I have a life?”

Many of our IB Diploma candidates have been some of our most involved students. However, ‘doing it all’ does require a high degree of organization.

“Will I have to take some subjects outside my areas of interest?”

Yes, you will.

If this seems too large an impediment, the Diploma might not be perfectly suitable for you.

IB believes in the ideal of Renaissance man—that the medical doctor who knows *Hamlet* is the best doctor! Also, many career paths change, and IB does not want to box students in so young.

Universities value the IB diploma because students have breadth and depth in their high-school educations.

“Will it hurt my marks?”

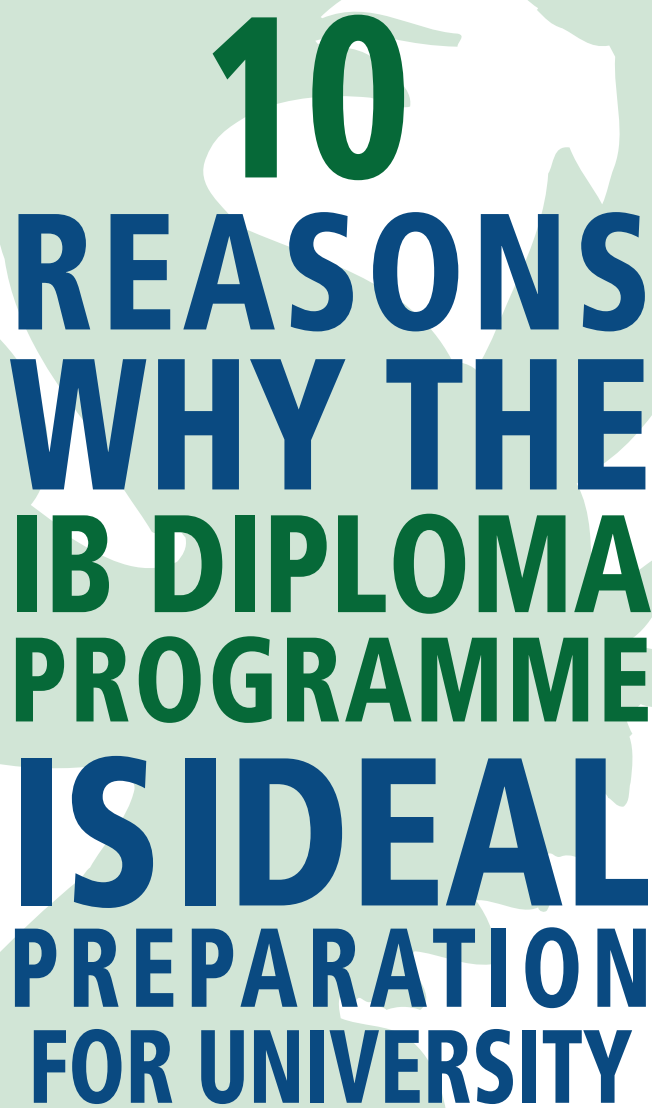
No.

As BC shifts away from standardized grade 12 provincial exams, universities increasingly value the integrity of externally marked IB grades.

Many universities translate IB grades generously, in order to acknowledge the more challenging work. At UBC, for example, a student capable of a provincial 80% might receive a higher mark from IB because of the way UBC respects an IB 5 at 86%.

In many cases, universities will take the higher of the two marks—IB and Provincial. A clear advantage.





10 REASONS WHY THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME IS IDEAL PREPARATION FOR UNIVERSITY

*From academic rigour to a
compassionate viewpoint, presenting
an at-a-glance guide to why higher
education institutions are so enamoured
of Diploma Programme students*

1. It offers academic breadth and depth

We know graduates do well. In 2011, figures from the UK's Higher Education Statistics Agency found that IB graduates were "much more likely to be enrolled at one of the top 20 higher education institutions than entrants holding other qualifications." Studying six subjects means students aren't forced to narrow their choices while still at school, and can keep university options open. That doesn't come at the expense of academic rigour, though. IB Diploma Programme students follow three subjects at Higher Level, where they receive 240 teaching hours in each. And learning a second language has been linked in studies to a higher level of achievement at both school and university.

2. Graduates care about more than just results

The creativity, action, service (CAS) requirement in the Diploma Programme encourages experiential learning—acquiring knowledge through direct experience. That could mean anything from building new homes in Africa to creating a newspaper for your local community. It gives students a perspective on the world, and the drive to plan their own activities—all skills that help distinguish IB alumni in the university admissions process. As IB graduate Gregoire-Francois Legault, now studying at McGill University in Canada, puts it: "While some see [CAS] at first as a pain, most do way more than the 150 required hours."

Good study habits create learners who hit the ground running in university

3. It creates independent learners who feel prepared

Every Diploma Programme graduate will have written an Extended Essay—an immersive research paper of up to 4,000 words that requires independent research and excellent organizational skills. A 2011 survey of university admissions staff undertaken by Cardiff University, UK found they valued the Extended Essay's role in developing cognitive, research, writing and communication skills. Dr. David Conley, Professor of Educational Policy and Leadership in the College of Education at the University of Oregon and founder of the Educational Policy Improvement Center, says the IB "exceeds standards in critical thinking and research skills" required for college-readiness in the USA. And many Extended Essays are presented at admissions interviews, to demonstrate students' analytical skills. Perhaps all that college-readiness is why research by SRI International found the graduation rate for IB alumni after four and six years studying in US universities was higher than the national average.

4. It's a genuinely international qualification

Major global challenges require global solutions—and the Diploma Programme aims to balance local and national identity with an international mindset as part of its commitment to building a better future. Students learn to see the world from different cultural perspectives, while learning another language that will help them communicate with peers from different backgrounds. "Like all IB programmes, the Diploma Programme aims to encourage students to become internationally minded people who recognize their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet," explains Robert Harrison, Curriculum Manager for Continuum Development. "IB World Schools help students engage in inquiry, action and reflection on locally and globally significant issues across the curriculum." And fittingly, the qualification is internationally benchmarked, allowing graduates to continue their studies anywhere in the world.

Learning a second language has been linked in many studies to higher achievement at both school and university

5. Universities recognize it—and give credit for it

The number of higher education institutions recognizing the Diploma Programme grew 21 per cent in 2011, backed by a proactive campaign of engagement, including a range of professional materials made available on the official IB website (www.ibo.org/recognition). And IB students are at an advantage with elite institutions: in the US, IB graduates are 21.4 per cent more likely to be admitted into 10 of the country's most prestigious universities, including Harvard, Princeton, Yale and Stanford.

IB graduates were much more likely to be enrolled at one of the top 20 higher education institutions than entrants holding other qualifications

6. The IB encourages critical thinking

Students learn to look beyond the facts: to analyse sources, link one subject to another and question the consensus. Inquisitiveness and interpretation are among the key cognitive properties of an IB education: a 2012 study of Diploma Programme students in Chicago found strong academic skills, especially related to analytical writing. Leading thinkers such as Professor Howard Gardner have identified the ability to reflect and critique as vital to effective 21st century learners.

7. You'll never need to learn time management

All that rigorous, independent study leads to vital organizational techniques that only become more important when students reach university. Good study habits create learners who hit the ground running in higher education. The 2012 Chicago study of Diploma Programme students found that they were able to set aside time for homework and resist going out with their friends when they needed to study.

8. It assesses more than examination techniques

Diploma Programme assessments are summative, largely taking place over the two years of the programme, focusing on what students have learned and their abilities, rather than what they haven't learned or can't do. Testing is rigorous, backed by high level evidence and is based on performance against set standards. As well as helping give a true picture of student performance, it also assists universities in the admissions process—with no grade inflation for more than 30 years, the Diploma Programme is a reliable and internationally consistent measure of academic excellence.

9. Subjects aren't taught in isolation

One of the main differences between the Diploma Programme and other curricula is Theory of Knowledge (ToK)—classes that encourage students to make connections between subjects and gain the skills they need to become critical thinkers and more effective learners, rather than simply repositories of knowledge. But ToK is only part of the picture: teachers in IB World Schools are encouraged to plan interdisciplinary classes. Seeing connections between subjects also helps prepare students for higher education studies, where learning is becoming less compartmentalized.

10. And here are 10 more...

The IB learner profile offers 10 qualities underpinning the Diploma Programme and the learners who embrace it. From 'open-minded' to 'balanced', they form a framework for an international education that goes much deeper in meeting the needs of a changing world. Go to Page 9 of this brochure to see the entire IB Learner Profile.

This article appears courtesy of the May 2012 issue of *IB World*, the magazine of the International Baccalaureate.

IB Diploma Programme Notes

Notes:

- two-year curriculum
- for Grade 11 and 12 students
- international examinations

Objectives:

- to provide a balanced education
- to promote international understanding and responsible citizenship
- to provide an opportunity for students to study abroad to explore other cultures
- symbol of academic integrity and intellectual promise

Courses and requirements:

- Mandatory 6 courses in Grade 11/12
- 3 Higher Level and 3 Standard Level

The following are offered:

- Group 1: English A1 (SL/HL) as a first language
- Group 2: French or Spanish (SL/HL), English (HL)
- Group 3: Geography (SL/HL)
History (SL/HL)
Economics (SL)
- Group 4: Biology, (SL/HL)
Chemistry (SL/HL)
Physics (SL/HL)
- Group 5: Mathematics (SL/HL)
Math Studies (SL)
- Group 6: Theatre (SL/HL) Visual Arts (HL)
or a second course from Group 3 or 4

Theory of Knowledge (ToK)

A coherent approach to learning, intended to:

- stimulate critical reflection
- question the bases/biases of knowledge
- develop a personal conclusion based on analysis and evidence

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

- minimum of 150 hours of non-academic cocurricular activities required
- emphasis on the importance of life outside the world of academics
- encourages students to build/share talents, create awareness, and work co-operatively with each other

Extended Essay

- students are required to write a 4000-word essay, based on original research
- students choose their own research topic from IB subjects
- prepares students for the type of writing expected at University level

Assessment

- mandatory for students to write IB examinations for each of their IB courses during Grade 12 year
- International Baccalaureate selects and trains examiners
- teachers also provide an internal assessment for each student which becomes a component in the final exam grading
- students are tested in a variety of different techniques and are given various opportunities to demonstrate their knowledge and understanding

Award of the Diploma:

- final grades are given for each subject on a scale from 1 (minimum) through 7 (maximum)
- requires a minimum total of 24 points
- must complete: the Extended Essay, ToK course, CAS activities
- students who fail to satisfy all requirements for the IB Diploma are awarded a certificate for each subject completed successfully

How IB Prepares Students for the World

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.” (IBO, 2007)

An Answer for Globalization

In 2002, Jean-Francois Rischard, then the Vice-President of the World Bank, said “Overcoming our current national mindsets will require new methodologies, instincts and politics to enable each one of us to think and act like a concerned global citizen.”

IB promotes a global perspective by:

- insisting that all students study at least one second language
- drawing on examples from different countries
- urging students to consider multiple perspectives
- developing an appreciation of other cultures and religions
- addressing global issues and providing possible solutions
- encouraging student and faculty exchanges with other countries

An Answer for the 21st Century

Recent reports by the National Center on Education and the Economy (2006) and the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2007) identify the following essential skills for the 21st Century:

- creativity and innovation
- self-discipline and organization
- leadership
- teamwork
- cross-disciplinary knowledge
- communication skills
- analytical reasoning
- real-world problem-solving skills

The IB Learner Profile

The skills listed above link effortlessly with the IB Learner Profile, which lists 10 attributes that IB programs seek to develop in students. IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers: We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

Knowledgeable: We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

Thinkers: We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators: We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

Principled: We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

Open-minded: We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring: We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

Risk-takers: We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

Balanced: We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

Reflective: We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

Persevering: In the fall of 2017, GNS added our own attribute. We see possibilities where others see impossibilities and are not afraid of failure. We work hard with determination, improving and making progress despite obstacles or limitations, with a focus on goal-setting and personal growth. We are always looking for the next challenge to conquer with courage and strength.

IB Course Descriptions

IB English Literature is an opportunity to, quite literally, “see the world” of literature: instead of studying the same works as every other North American teenager, IB students immerse themselves in the best writing from around the world. After two years in IB Literature, students think critically about literature in a reinvigorated fashion; gain confidence in verbal articulation of ideas; and write about literature at a university level. Wherever students may go in their academic futures, this course will change the way they think, write, and speak.

IB Language and Literature focuses on the study of English language and literature across media and cultures. In studying language as communication we aim to broaden student perspectives of what constitutes a text, and develop skills in both the analysis and production of a range of text types, including fiction, non-fiction and mass media. Students investigate how language can shape or express identity, how language develops in different cultural contexts, and how its production and reception is affected by the medium itself.

Language B is the study of either the French, Spanish or English language. Students have the opportunity to immerse themselves in the perspectives of French, Spanish and English speaking countries. Our focus is not to memorize grammar and vocabulary by rote, but to learn language through the study of Culture and Traditions, Relationships, Arts and Leisure, Technology and Global Questions. You will be able to read, write and speak confidently in a second language as you begin to make your own way in the world. And, as Goethe once said, *“He who is ignorant of foreign languages, knows not his own.”*

IB Geography uses real-world events, instead of dry statistics, to cover the wide range of topics that students are asked to investigate. It focuses upon the relationships between individuals, societies, and the physical environment (in both time and space). It seeks to identify patterns and trends amidst all of those relationships, and therefore evaluates the processes behind them. IB Geography is very current: its curriculum is rooted in, and inspired by, the most recent United Nations Millennium Development Goals—a strong guiding theme throughout the course. With 60% of the course being devoted to human geography and 40% being devoted to physical geography, this is a course that connects historical content to real-world issues.

IB History is particularly geared to sharpen the analytical, evaluative, and research skills so necessary to make sense of today’s important issues. Students learn to properly assess historical evidence and from there frame a convincing argument. It is no wonder that history majors are considered some of the best

candidates for law school! Seminar discussions and university level research are part of this enriched programme. A varied curriculum takes students through critical events, themes and personalities of the 20th Century such as: world wars, revolutions in Russia and Cuba, the civil rights struggle in America, and the ongoing struggle between dictatorship and democracy.

IB Economics emphasizes the economic theories of microeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting individuals, firms and markets, and the economic theories of macroeconomics, which deal with economic variables affecting countries, governments and societies. These economic theories are not to be studied in a vacuum—rather, they are to be applied to real-world issues. Prominent among these issues are fluctuations in economic activity, international trade, economic development and environmental sustainability.

IB Global Politics explores fundamental political concepts, such as power, liberty, equality, sustainability, human rights and peace, in a range of contexts and through a variety of approaches. Students examine local, national and international arenas of political activity. The course allows students to develop research, analysis and critical evaluation skills as they study abstract concepts and apply them to real world examples and cases studies. In addition, HL students examine two global political challenges. Students complete an internal assessment activity where a political issue is explored through theory and combined with a experiential learning piece and a written report.

Students who take **IB Biology** gain valuable experience in the design and execution of experiments that reflect their ability to think creatively and solve problems. The course provides students the opportunity to understand their biological world and the current issues that impact humanity. Study in this discipline will broaden their horizons and prepare them to follow biology related career paths.

IB Chemistry inspires students to explore and understand the way chemicals behave and interact. Whether to gain an understanding of baking soda volcanoes or to prepare for university-level chemistry, this course will open students’ eyes to the “way things work.” Theory—paired with lab activities—provides a genuine chance to test understanding. While the course can serve as excellent university preparation, it will also develop scientific literacy and critical thinking skills that are useful in a diverse range of studies and professions.

IB Physics is the best preparation a high school student can get for a university education in science or engineering. It represents a challenging combination of mathematical problem solving

and conceptual puzzles focused on describing the natural world. Students can expect varied lab work using modern technology. Start looking at the world through different eyes!

IB Mathematics: Applications & Interpretations is a comprehensive course that builds on the algebra learned in previous mathematics courses and moves into some more advanced topics including quadratic functions and equations, trigonometry of non-right angles and circular trigonometry, inequalities, rational expressions and equations, inverse functions, and systems of quadratic equations. Problem solving skills are emphasized throughout the course. This course is recognized to develop abstract skills not only in mathematics but also in reasoning and in applying ideas.

IB Mathematics: Analysis & Approaches is a rigorous course designed for highly motivated students who love mathematics. It delves much deeper into different math topics. Students get an appreciation about the incredible richness of the subject as every new idea opens up more possibility for further investigation. This course may well be the most complete math course offered to high school students anywhere in the world—successful completion opens limitless possibilities.

The **IB Theatre Arts** syllabus consists of three equal, interrelated areas: theatre in context, theatre process, and presenting theatre.

These areas are approached from the perspective of the following specialist theatre roles: creator, designer, director and performer. Key tasks make up the IB Theatre course content and assessment: creating a solo performance piece (HL), taking on the role of director, researching a convention of a theatre they have not previously studied, and collaborating to create and present an original piece of theatre for and to a specified target audience.

IB Visual Arts allows students to take calculated creative risks in a supportive and intellectual environment. The artistic process becomes second nature to students as they experiment with modes and media of expression while developing a unique aesthetic of their own. Through the exploration of personally significant imagery, students learn to express their thoughts and opinions visually while recognizing the social, cultural and historical context in which they create their art.

Theory of Knowledge lies at the heart of the IB curriculum. The emphasis is on teaching a problem-solving methodology that is open-minded yet rigorous. In ToK we focus on looking for connections that go across the curriculum. Thus, we might look at a real world issue and ask how it might be approached by a poet as well as by an engineer. Ultimately, ToK aims to produce students who are strong critical thinkers, capable of approaching problems from multiple perspectives.



How have our recent Grad classes performed? And where are they currently studying?

- the 55 students in the class of 2019 earned \$739,000 in scholarships from universities around the world
- an average of 3.3 post-secondary offers of acceptance were received per student in the class of 2019
- 100% of our grads are accepted into 1 of their top 3 post-secondary choices

These are the top 10 most heavily-attended Canadian Universities for our most recent Grads:

Concordia University
Dalhousie University

McGill University
Queen's University

University of Alberta
University of British
Columbia

University of Toronto
University of Victoria

University of Waterloo
University of Western Ontario

These are just a few of the universities, outside of Canada, where some of our most recent Grads have chosen to study:

Durham University [England]

Harvard University [USA]

Stanford University [USA]

University of Pennsylvania [USA]

St. Andrew's [Scotland]

University of Kent [England]

University of California – Berkeley [USA]

Carnegie Mellon University [USA]

University College of London [England]

Oxford University [England]

London School of Economics [England]

Cornell University [USA]



“The IB Diploma is more than knowledge garnered from a textbook; it is a way into learning. Yet, I do not believe the merits of IB stand alone in my story. It was IB in conjunction with my GNS teachers—no, my GNS family—that supported me to reach heights I never thought possible.”

Michael Peters, Grad 2010

Winner of Canada's Top 20 Under 20 Award