

IB Diploma Programme Subject Choices Guide

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1. Programme Overview

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous two-year curriculum. The programme consists of **six subject groups** and a **core component**.

Subject Selection Summary:

Subject Group	Requirement	Available Subjects	Key Notes
Group 1 Language & Literature	Mandatory	English A/Dutch Literature or Language & Literature, SSST	First language, at least one required. SSST is taught at Standard Level only.
Group 2 Language Acquisition	Mandatory	French/Spanish/Dutch B, French Ab Initio, Latin	Second language, timetable restrictions may apply. Only one option can be selected from this group French Ab Initio is offered at Standard Level only
Group 3 Individuals & Societies	Mandatory	History, Geography, Economics, Business Management	Business Management HL only
Group 4 Experimental Sciences	Mandatory	Biology, Chemistry, Physics, ESS	Physics requires strong math component ESS is taught at Standard Level only and cannot be taken with any other subject in this group
Group 5 Mathematics	Mandatory	Analysis & Approaches, Applications & Interpretations	Applications and Interpretations is only offered at Standard Level
Group 6 Arts & Electives	Optional*	Visual Arts, Theatre, or additional Group 1-4 subject	*Can substitute with additional academic subject Students cannot take both Visual Arts and Theatre

Course Details:

- The full diploma consists of 6 subjects: three subjects at **Higher Level (HL)** and **three at Standard Level (SL)**
- Completion of the **IB Core**: Theory of Knowledge (TOK), Extended Essay (EE), and Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)

2. Group 1 - Language A

First-language courses designed for students who are fluent in the language. At least one Language A course should be a part of the student's subject package, with a maximum of two Language A courses being a part of their overall package.

Course	Languages Available	Levels	Notes
Language A: Literature	English, Dutch	HL/SL	Core literature study
Language A: Language and Literature	English, Dutch	HL/SL	Literature + media/non-literary texts
SSST Literature	Student's best language	SL only	For languages not offered by school (on consultation)

Important Requirements:

- All students must choose at least one Language A course
- Students may take **two Language A courses for a bilingual diploma**, but they must not both be of the same type
- **Example:** A student taking English Language and Literature may not also take Dutch Language and Literature

- Students taking two Language A subjects cannot take both as literature-based courses

3. Group 2 - Language Acquisition (Language B and Ab Initio)

Additional language courses for students learning a second language.

Course	Levels	Target Students	Restrictions
French B	HL/SL	Intermediate French learners	Cannot combine with Spanish B
Spanish B	HL/SL	Intermediate Spanish learners	Cannot combine with French B
Dutch B	HL/SL	Intermediate Dutch learners	Cannot combine with other B languages
French Ab Initio	SL only	Complete beginners	-
Latin	HL/SL	Bilingual (IT) students only	-

Important Notes:

- **Timetable conflicts prevent certain combinations** – see restrictions above
- Self-taught courses are Standard Level only and followed with a tutor outside the regular timetable (student covers all private tuition costs)

4. Group 3 - Individuals and Societies

Course	Levels Available	Focus Area	Notes
History	HL/SL	Historical analysis and interpretation	-
Geography	HL/SL	Physical and human geography	-
Economics	HL/SL	Economic theory and application	-
Business Management	HL only	Business theory and case studies	Higher Level only

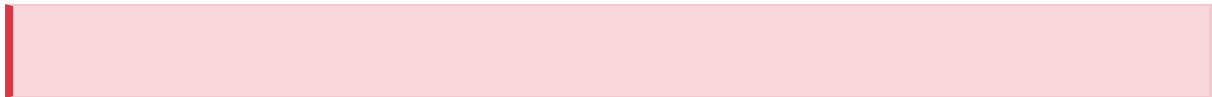
Special Notes:

- **Business Management is offered only at Higher Level**
- Some Group 3 subject combinations with Group 6 subjects (such as Visual Arts) and certain Experimental Sciences may not fit within the timetable

5. Group 4 - Experimental Sciences

Course	Levels	Prerequisites/Recommendations	Restrictions
Biology	HL/SL	-	-
Chemistry	HL/SL	-	Some timetable limitations

Course	Levels	Prerequisites/Recommendations	Restrictions
Physics	HL/SL	Strong mathematics skills required Recommended with Math Analysis & Approaches. Subject to results of Grade 10 to DP Promotional Criteria (internal) or Mathematics Entrance Test (External candidate)	Cannot take with Mathematics Applications & Interpretations
Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS)	SL only	-	Cannot combine with any other experimental science



6. Group 5 - Mathematics

Course	Levels	Content Focus
Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches	HL/SL	Pure mathematics, calculus, algebra
Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations	SL only	Statistics, practical applications, modeling

Important:

Taking **Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches** is subject to students meeting promotional criteria (internal) or an entrance test (external).

7. Group 6 - The Arts and Electives

Course	Levels	Content Focus	Restrictions
Visual Arts	HL/SL	Art creation, criticism, cultural contexts	-
Theatre	HL/SL	Performance, production, theatre research	Visual Arts and Theatre are timetabled simultaneously and cannot be taken together
Electives		-	If Visual Arts or Theatre are not chosen, select an additional subject from Group 2, 3 or 4

Important Restrictions:

- As an alternative, students may choose an **additional subject from Groups 2–4** instead of an Arts subject
- Some combinations (e.g., Chemistry with Visual Arts or Business Management with Visual Arts) may not fit in the school timetable

8. IB Core Requirements

In addition to six subjects, all students must complete the IB Core:

Core Component	Description	Assessment
Theory of Knowledge (TOK)	Critical thinking about knowledge and ways of knowing	Presentation and Essay
Extended Essay (EE)	4,000-word original work on a topic of the student's choice	Subject specific written essay
Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)	~50 hours per component of experiential learning - scheduled as "Core" hours	Portfolio and reflections

9. Additional School Programme Components

Component	Duration/Frequency	When
Library Hours	Built into timetable	Throughout programme
Physical Education	90 minutes, 5-week blocks	DP1 only
Mentor Hour	As needed	Thursday mornings
Student Development Programme	8 sessions	DP1, Term 1

10. Selection Guidance

When selecting subjects, students should consider:

- **Need: University/Tertiary Educational entrance requirements** (especially for sciences, mathematics, and languages)

- **Like: Personal strengths and interests** across subject areas
- **Proficiency: Workload management** – HL subjects require significantly more time and depth

Final Reminders:

- Subject choices should be made carefully as changes after the start of the programme may not be possible
- Taking seven subjects should only occur in exceptional circumstances or when there is a genuine need e.g. for university admission requirements. A seventh subject typically results in a certificate of completion, not an addition to the diploma itself.
- Please consult with the DP Team for further information regarding subject combinations and university requirements

International School Hilversum IB Diploma Programme

This document is updated annually. Please ensure you have the most current version.