



**“Our experience is that IB diploma graduates are incredibly well prepared for university success. The program’s international flavour, academic rigour and emphasis on inquiry based learning means that IB Diploma students enter university with a global outlook, an excellent work ethic and the critical thinking skills to ensure they achieve.”**

Margaret Fairman,  
director, Office of Prospective Students and Scholarships,  
University of Queensland, Australia

## Understanding the IB Diploma Programme scores

*An international standard for more than 40 years*

For over 40 years, the International Baccalaureate (IB) has been the leader in international education and in providing high-quality and rigorous assessments to students in nearly 140 countries. The IB’s unique assessment model ensures a high level of validity and reliability that has resulted in consistent IB diploma pass rates with no grade inflation over time.

IB assessments are designed to emphasize the development of higher-order cognitive skills. They are criterion-related and focus on students’ ability to think analytically and critically, to integrate and apply their learning, to work collaboratively and to communicate what they have learned in writing and orally. The assessments use varied tasks that evaluate students’ abilities in these areas and may include the following types in a standard level or higher level course:

- oral
- multiple choice
- short answer
- portfolio
- essay
- exhibition
- performance
- independent research

Most subjects have at least three or four separate assessment components, including both internal and external assessments. Internal assessments are administered and marked by IB teachers. The IB teachers’ marking is then moderated by the IB. External assessments are standardized throughout the world with all students sitting for their written examinations over a three-week period in either May or November.

The balance between internal and external assessment ensures that all objectives of the course are adequately and appropriately assessed.

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**“Diploma Programme students are well-rounded, multifaceted, multiskilled and have studied in depth. They have good time-management skills. They score higher than students in other national systems, and the IB score is worldwide the same measure.”**

Hrilina Lock, undergraduate admissions manager, London School of Economics, UK

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Nearly 6,500 trained examiners worldwide are involved in different stages of the assessment process, including the development, marking and moderation of assessments. The moderation process ensures accuracy and allows the IB to monitor the work of examiners.

“What do IB Diploma Programme scores tell us? Our research into student performance at UBC indicates that IB students with diploma scores in the 27 to 30 point range perform the same as straight-A students out of our provincial high school curriculum.”

**Michael Bluhm**, associate director, undergraduate admissions,  
University of British Columbia, Canada

The IB diploma is awarded to students who meet the subject requirements, receive a minimum score of 24 points, and satisfactorily complete the core components, including extended essay, theory of knowledge, and creativity, action, service. The highest total available for a Diploma Programme student is 45 points. Scores are based on the grades of 1 to 7 awarded for each of the six subjects, for a total of 42 points, and up to 3 additional points for the core components.

### Strong standards applied consistently around the world for more than 40 years

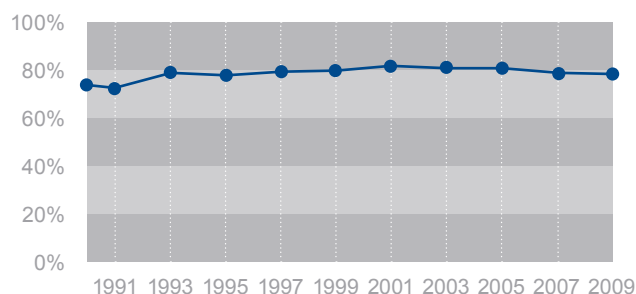
The number of students in the Diploma Programme has increased from 2,800 students in 1980 to nearly 120,000 now. Over the same period, pass rates have remained consistent at around 80%, and the average score on the IB diploma has been 30 points. Less than 1% of students receiving the IB diploma obtain a score of 45 points.

Grade distributions on the IB assessments vary by subject. Students who complete standard level or higher level subjects are well prepared for success in that subject in university. Only 7% receive the top grade of a 7, and more than 50% of all grades fall between 4 and 5.

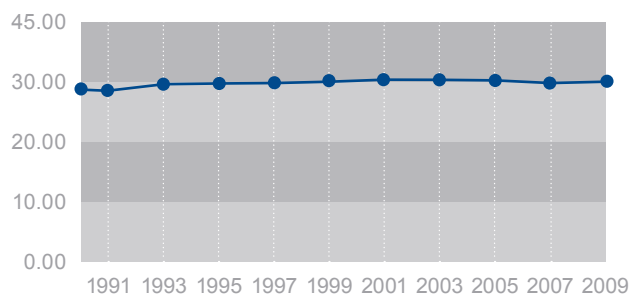
“IB students and their parents recognize that they’re in a unique program, a very rigorous program, and it’s important for the admissions office, in particular, to be aware of that difference and to be aware of that rigour, making sure that our staff is well-informed on the program.”

**Dr Kedra Ishop**, vice provost and director of admissions, University of Texas at Austin, USA

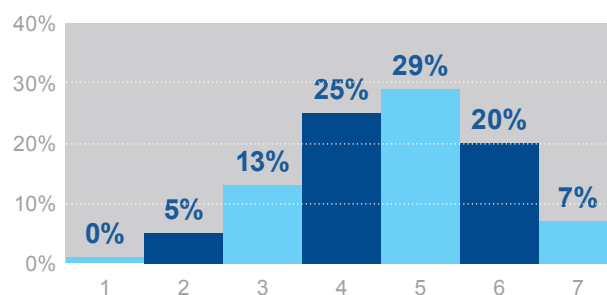
**Pass rate for the IB Diploma Programme 1990 to 2009**



**Average IB Diploma point score 1990 to 2009**



**Percent distribution of IB exam grades (1 to 7) May and November 2009**



For more information on the IB curriculum and assessment, go online to [www.ibo.org/recognition](http://www.ibo.org/recognition)

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