



The International Baccalaureate
Diploma Programme

Handbook 2022-2023

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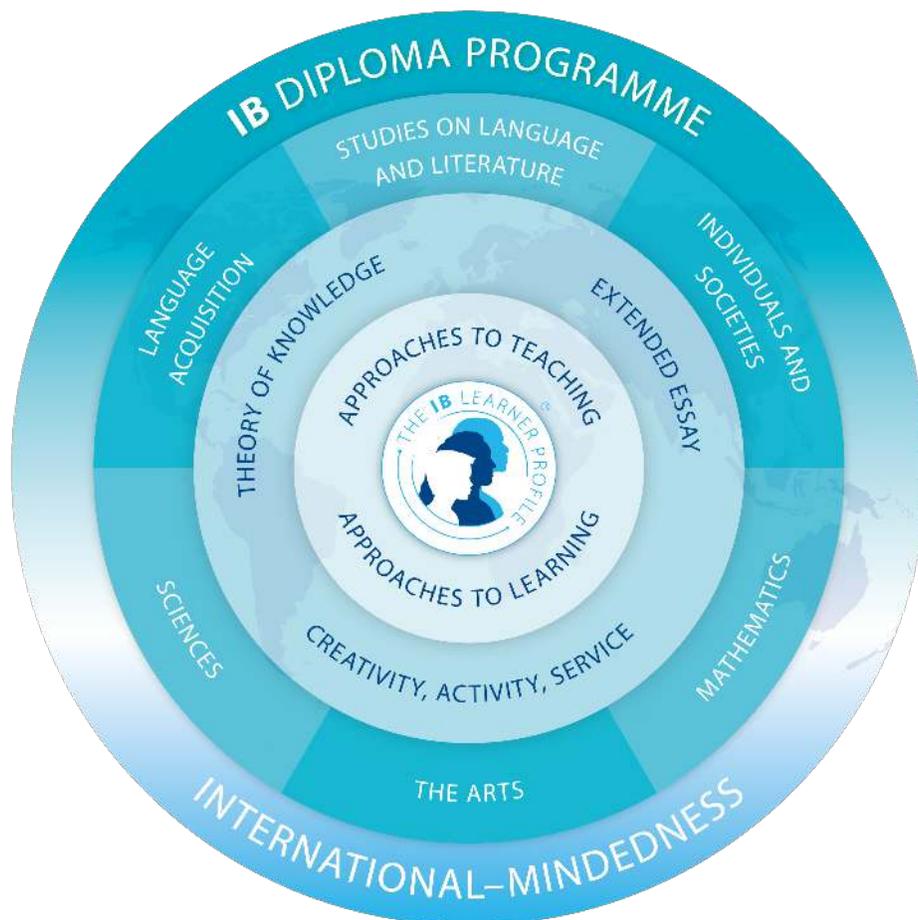
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Overview

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme is a comprehensive course of study designed to be undertaken in the last two years of secondary school. It is a program designed to build students' inquiring mindset, foster their desire to learn, and prepare them to excel at their careers and lead meaningful lives.

The Diploma model is not patterned on an educational system of any one country but incorporates the best elements of many. It is a deliberate blending of the specialization required in some national systems and the breadth preferred in others. The curriculum is concentric circles: Approaches to teaching and learning at the center and anchoring the three unique interdisciplinary requirements and the six academic areas. The Learner remains at the center of the program. Subjects are studied concurrently over two years.

Students at WSA are encouraged to approach their 11th grade year of study with the anticipation of participating as a full Diploma Programme candidate and completing all of the requirements to earn the IB Diploma. However, either before or as the student progresses through the program, adjustments can be made to their commitment to completing the IB requirements, as it would best serve the student. Students may choose to do all, some, or none of the IB requirements.



The Learner Profile

The IB Diploma Programme aims to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

The IB learner profile is a broad range of human capacities and responsibilities that go beyond academic success. These profile traits imply a commitment to help all members of the school community learn to respect themselves, others, and the world around them.

West Sound Academy helps students strive to be:

Inquirers – Students develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry, research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning.

Knowledgeable – Students explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.

Thinkers – Students exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.

Communicators – Students understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.

Principled – Students act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

Open-minded – Students understand and appreciate their own cultures, personal histories and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.

Caring – Students show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have personal commitment to service and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.

Risk-takers – Students approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought. They have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.

Balanced – Students understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.

Reflective – Students give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

Why do IB?

The reason that colleges and universities are so pleased to accept IB students and potentially award them credit is that IB students are being asked to do the same things they will be required to do once enrolled in college:

- Be savvy about managing their time
- Demonstrate higher-level thinking skills
- Produce high-stakes papers and presentations
- Prioritize effectively
- Advocate for themselves
- Meet deadlines
- Collaborate to increase achievement
- Consciously schedule recreational time and manage stress

Assimilating these skills in high school has proven to dramatically increase the student's success rate once in college and later in life. Students will be held accountable to some stringent deadlines in this program, and missing these deadlines or not completing homework will dramatically decrease the student's ability to perform well on the culminating IB exams.

Timeline

Students at West Sound Academy all take the same courses in high school. Some students will choose to send materials to the International Baccalaureate for consideration of earning a second IB diploma or IB certificate. Below is a timeline of important milestones in the average high school sequence.

9th Grade			
Students orient to high school academics and expectations. Students practice building good time management skills now, being diligent about meeting deadlines, making appointments with teachers for help, and working on assignments in multiple sittings. Conversations about the future, interests, and types of colleges are encouraged among parents and students.			
10th Grade			
It is never too early to visit colleges and universities with students when traveling. Students are encouraged to evaluate their strengths and areas of interest as they complete their sophomore year. Parents and students should continue to have conversations about interests and potential areas of study in college.		Spring: WSA schedules individual meetings with parents and students to plan for 11 th grade and for students to declare their third HL subject	
11th grade – Fall Semester			
Summer: Students plan CAS activities for the year	Start of school: students are encouraged to keep all options open as they embark on their classes	Extended Essay and Senior Project are introduced, and research begins	Oct: PSAT Test
11th Grade –Spring Semester			
Theory of Knowledge class Part One begins CAS work continues	Mar/Apr: Students take the SAT at WSA Spring: EE/SP research continues, and writing begins	June Term: EE/SP initial reflections/notes/writing Students plan summer CAS activities and their scope of work for the EE or SP	
12th Grade – Fall Semester			
Start of School: DP coordinator confirms student's IB testing status and registers students for exams	Oct: Rough draft of EE/SP is due Oct: SAT at WSA	Dec: Final draft of EE/SP is due DP Coordinator	Nov-Jan: College applications are due CAS activities continue
12th Grade – Spring Semester			
In most classes, new content instruction winds down between Feb and March	April: Teachers start test review. Visual Arts uploads are completed	May: IB Testing is conducted under standardized testing conditions	July 6: IB Results are released

IB Choices

All students enrolled in courses during the junior and senior years are IB students because those are the classes WSA offers in those years.

It is a rare exception when a class is taught differently because a student does not intend to send their materials to IB for assessment. The distinction among students is whether they intend to submit materials to IB and sit for the IB culminating exams during the senior year or not.

Diploma Candidates

Full IB Diploma Candidates are students who have opted to submit materials for IB and take the exams for all six groups of study. In addition, they have decided to complete the Extended Essay, Theory of Knowledge and Creativity, Activity and Service requirements as stipulated by IB. Diploma Candidates are eligible to receive a second and highly regarded diploma from the IB if their scores from the external assessment meet a certain threshold. Students who are usually successful at earning the IB Diploma consistently practice their strong study skills and knowledge retention throughout their academic careers. The IB Diploma requires a significant commitment of time and study outside the school day and during the summer between the junior and senior years. IB Diploma Candidates are often awarded enough college credit to complete the requirements for one year of university study. Thus it should be expected that the students are working at the collegiate level.

Diploma Course Students

Choosing to submit materials for assessment by IB in one or more courses is an excellent option for many students and can be compared to the Advanced Placement (AP) track. Students can select the courses in which they submit materials and test only in those subjects. They have the potential of being awarded college credit for those IB courses, although many colleges only award credit if the course is taken at the Higher Level. Students may also choose to earn a certificate in TOK, EE, or CAS.

IB Diploma Subject Requirements: The Six Academic Groups

A full IB Diploma Candidate studies six academic subjects over two years. Three courses are taken at the Higher Level (HL), and three are taken at the Standard Level (SL). In addition, the IB Diploma Candidate also takes a Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course, writes an Extended Essay (EE), and participates in Creativity, Action and Service Learning (CAS) activities.

The IB awards the IB Diploma after successfully completing the six academic courses and their associated culminating exams, as well as successfully completing the TOK, EE and CAS requirements. The IB Diploma is a separate diploma granted by the International Baccalaureate Organization and is distinct from the one issued by West Sound Academy for completion of high school studies.

Students may also pursue individual Diploma courses rather than the full IB Diploma. The IB awards a certificate for an individual course after successfully completing the requirements and culminating exam.

Courses taken in the junior and senior years will appear as "IB" courses on the transcript unless the student has opted for accommodations that preclude this designation.

IB Courses at WSA:

Group 1

Language and Literature HL

Group 2

Language Acquisition: Spanish/French SL and HL

Group 3

Individuals and Societies: History HL

Group 4

Experimental Sciences: Biology SL and HL

(Teacher approval is required for students to select HL Biology, and a minimum of 5 students is required for HL Biology to be offered)

Group 5

Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations SL and HL

Group 6

Theatre HL and SL

Psychology SL

(Offerings may vary depending on student interest. A minimum of 5 students is required for any subject and level)

The degree of difficulty between HL and SL varies from subject to subject. The difference in Math and Biology is more significant than in other subject areas. Students are asked to think carefully when choosing their third HL subject and consult with the IB Coordinator prior to making their final choice.

Group 1: Language and Literature

The language A: language and literature course aims to develop in students skills of textual analysis and the understanding that texts, both literary and non-literary, can be seen as autonomous yet simultaneously related to culturally determined reading practices. The course is designed to be flexible—teachers have the opportunity to construct it in a way that reflects the interests and concerns that are relevant to their students while developing in students a range of transferable skills. An understanding of the ways in which formal elements are used to create meaning in a text is combined with an exploration of how that meaning is affected by reading practices that are culturally defined and by the circumstances of production and reception.

Expectations

Having successfully completed the Group 1 Language and Literature program, students are able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a range of texts
- Demonstrate an understanding of the use of language, structure, technique and style
- Demonstrate a critical understanding of the various ways in which the reader constructs meaning and of how context influences this constructed meaning
- Demonstrate an ability to choose a text type appropriate to the purpose required
- Demonstrate an ability to use terminology relevant to the various text types studied
- Demonstrate an ability to analyze the effects of language, structure, technique and style on the reader
- Demonstrate an ability to compare and contrast the formal elements, content and context of texts
- Discuss the different ways in which language and image may be used in a range of texts
- Demonstrate an ability to evaluate conflicting viewpoints within and about a text

Group 2: Language Acquisition

Language Acquisition courses enable students to use a second language in a range of contexts and for many purposes. The courses therefore focus on written and spoken communication.

WSA offers Language Acquisition in Spanish, French or English.

Assessments include a recorded oral component and a written exam that includes a listening component.

Expectations

Having successfully completed the Group 2 Language Acquisition program, students are expected to:

- Communicate clearly and effectively in a range of situations
- Understand and use oral and written forms of the language that are essential for effective communication in a range of styles and situations
- Understand and use a wide range of vocabulary
- Elect a register and style that are appropriate to the situation
- Express ideas with general clarity and fluency
- Structure arguments in a clear, coherent and convincing way
- Understand and analyze moderately complex written and spoken material
- Assess subtleties of the language in a wide range of forms, styles and registers
- Show sensitivity to the culture(s) related to the language studied

Group 3: Individuals and Societies

IB History explores historical themes and provides students with the skills to evaluate source documents critically. Students' understanding of themes and the skills they develop are applied to an in-depth analysis of Modern History in general and at the higher level (HL) to a study of one region in particular. WSA offers IB History HL following a History of Europe regional study.

Assessments include a written examination and a historical investigation paper.

Expectations

Having successfully completed the Group 3 History program, students are expected to:

- Recall and select historical knowledge and demonstrate an understanding of historical context and processes: cause and effect, and continuity and change
- Understand historical sources and deploy detailed, in-depth knowledge
- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a specific historical topic
- Apply historical knowledge as evidence
- Show awareness of different approaches to, and interpretations of, historical issues and events
- Compare and contrast historical sources as evidence and present a summary of evidence
- Evaluate different approaches to, and interpretations of, historical issues and events
- Evaluate historical sources as evidence
- Evaluate and synthesize evidence from both historical sources and background knowledge

Group 4: Experimental Sciences

IB Experimental Science courses develop an understanding of the scientific method. WSA offers IB Biology. The curriculum focuses on rigorous content, experimental design, and data analysis. Biology students work collaboratively on an interdisciplinary project that encourages students to appreciate the environmental, social and ethical implications of science.

Assessment includes a written examination and an individual investigation in which students design, carry out, and analyze a laboratory experiment.

Expectations

Having successfully completed the Group 4 Experimental Sciences program, students are expected to:

- Display knowledge of factual information in the syllabus and a command of concepts and principles
- Select and apply relevant information, concepts and principles in a wide variety of contexts
- Analyze and evaluate quantitative and qualitative data
- Construct explanations of complex phenomena and make appropriate predictions
- Solve quantitative and/or qualitative problems
- Communicate logically and concisely using appropriate terminology and conventions and show insight or originality in their inquiries
- Demonstrate personal skills, perseverance and responsibility in investigative activities
- Work well within a team and approach investigations in an ethical manner, paying attention to environmental impact
- Display competence in a range of investigative techniques

Teacher approval is required to take Biology at the Higher Level.

Group 5: Mathematics

WSA offers Mathematics: Applications and Interpretations. This course emphasizes the meaning of mathematics in context by focusing on topics that are often used as applications or in mathematical modeling. This course also includes topics that are traditionally part of a college prep math course, such as calculus and statistics.

This course is available to students both at the Higher Level and Standard Level, and students decide at which level to test at the start of their senior year. Assessments for Math HL and SL include written examinations and a mathematical exploration paper.

Expectations

Having successfully completed the Group 5 mathematical program, students are expected to:

- Recall, select and use their knowledge of mathematical facts, concepts and techniques in a variety of familiar and unfamiliar contexts.
- Recall, select and use their knowledge of mathematical skills, results and models in both abstract and real-world contexts to solve problems.
- Transform common realistic contexts into mathematics; comment on the context; sketch or draw mathematical diagrams, graphs or constructions both on paper and using technology; record methods, solutions and conclusions using standardized notation; use appropriate notation and terminology.
- Use technology accurately, appropriately and efficiently both to explore new ideas and to solve problems.
- Construct mathematical arguments through use of precise statements, logical deduction and inference and by the manipulation of mathematical expressions.
- Investigate unfamiliar situations, both abstract and from the real world, involving organizing and analyzing information, making conjectures, drawing conclusions, and testing their validity.

Group 6: The Arts

Students have three choices in Group 6: Theatre, and Psychology

Theatre is a dynamic, collaborative and live art form. It is a practical subject that encourages discovery through experimentation, the taking of risks and the presentation of ideas to others. It results in the development of both theatre and life skills; the building of confidence, creativity and working collaboratively.

The IB Diploma Programme theatre course is a multifaceted theatre-making course of study. It gives students the opportunity to make theatre as creators, designers, directors and performers. It emphasizes the importance of working both individually and collaboratively as part of an ensemble. It offers the opportunity to engage actively in the creative process, transforming ideas into action as inquisitive and productive artists.

Assessment includes external evaluation of a portfolio of a student's work as well as an external moderation of the teacher-evaluated student theatre journal. There is no written examination for Theatre.

Psychology is the systematic study of behavior and mental processes and examines the interaction of biological, cognitive and sociocultural influences on human behavior. This course develops an understanding of how psychological knowledge is generated, developed and applied and allows students to understand themselves better and appreciate the diversity of human behavior.

This course is approached holistically with biological, cognitive, and sociocultural analysis being taught in an integrated way that ensures students are able to develop an understanding of what all humans share, as well as the immense diversity of influences on human behavior and mental processes. The ethical concerns raised by the methodology and application of psychological research are also key considerations of the IB psychology course.

Assessment includes a written examination and an experimental study and report.

Higher Level or Standard Level?

The distinction between Higher Level and Standard Level courses lies in the depth of material covered and the amount of contact time with the teacher. HL students are required to have 240 hours of instruction time and SL students are required to have 150 hours of instructional time.

WSA requires that English and History are taken at the Higher Level by all students enrolled in those classes. Full IB Candidates will choose their third HL course late in the spring of the sophomore year. Full IB students may be expected to participate in Higher Level instructional time outside of the regularly scheduled class time. This is usually coordinated by the instructor during a mutually beneficial time but could also be done during June Term. Some courses may only be offered at the Higher Level through an online provider.

Academic Honesty

Proven academic dishonesty in work submitted to IB automatically disqualifies a student from receiving the IB Diploma. If plagiarism is detected before submission, the WSA Academic Honesty policy in the WSA Student Handbook will apply.

Creativity, Activity and Service Learning (CAS)

CAS enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development through experiential learning. At the same time, it provides an essential counterbalance to the academic pressures of the rest of the Diploma Program. The WSA CAS program is both a challenging and enjoyable personal journey of self-discovery. CAS activities are as diverse as our student body. Each student is unique and therefore has different goals and needs, but all CAS opportunities offer profound and life-changing experiences.

CAS involves:

- Real, purposeful activities, with significant outcomes
- Personal challenge—tasks extend students yet are achievable in scope
- Thoughtful consideration, such as planning, reviewing progress, reporting
- Reflection on outcomes and personal learning.

Please see the CAS Handbook for the specific requirements for CAS. CAS Activities may begin in August before the start of the junior year and must continue into the senior year to represent concurrency of learning.

Theory of Knowledge (TOK)

Theory of Knowledge examines the origins of knowledge as students wrestle with the question, "What do I mean when I say 'I know', and why should anyone believe me?"

TOK is a required course for all 11th grade students who meet the English language requirements and is taken in lieu of an elective during the spring of the junior year. Those students intending to submit their TOK work for IB assessment will complete the TOK requirements during the Fall of their senior year.

Extended Essay (EE)

The Extended Essay is a 4000-word research essay based on a topic of student choice and interest. The self-directed study is done independently under the advice and guidance of an assigned teacher mentor. The essay must be in the genre of a subject that WSA can support as part of the Diploma Programme or be a qualified interdisciplinary project as specified in the World Studies Extended Essay requirements.

The Extended Essay is an independent research body of work that needs to be completed in the Fall of the senior year. If the essay is not complete by the due date published by the EE Coordinator, then the student may not continue as a full IB Diploma Candidate from that point forward. The student may continue as an IB Diploma Course Student and convert their EE work to complete the requirements of the Senior Project. Students are required to complete either the Extended Essay or the Senior Project in order to meet WSA's graduation requirements.

Culminating Exams

During the month of May of the senior year, IB Diploma Candidate students will be scheduled for their IB course exams (also referred to as “papers”) according to the published exam schedule of IB. Students may have up to three exam sessions per day. Each course has between two and three exam sessions. The exams must be given during a window of time as prescribed by the IB. Taking exams earlier or later to accommodate absenteeism cannot be arranged and the student will forfeit the diploma if they are not available during the exam sessions. The exam schedule is published in the fall of the senior year. Accommodations can be made for a medical emergency.

Students taking IB exams are not expected to take a final exam for that same course. On days that an exam is scheduled, students are not expected to attend regular classes. Students not taking IB exams are expected to complete all assignments and exams provided by the instructor through to the last day of senior final exams.

Inclusive Assessment

All students with a documented need for accommodations have the opportunity to take exams in conditions that support them. For IB exams, these are called inclusive assessment arrangements. The documentation is provided to IB when registering candidates for exams in the Fall of senior year. Students with adverse circumstances such as bereavement, injuries, illnesses, or natural disaster will be supported by IB and the school’s IB Coordinator.

Final Diploma Grade Results

Final grade results are issued online by IB during the second week of July. Personal security codes are issued to students. In the event that a code is lost, the student can telephone the school to obtain another copy of their code. Exam results are issued to one university at the request of the student. IB automatically forwards results to the university that represents the student’s top choice as long as this choice is clearly communicated to the IB Diploma Coordinator in advance of June 1. After this deadline, the student must request their own transcript directly from IB.

Achieving the IB Diploma

In order to achieve the IB Diploma, certain requirements must be met in a variety of benchmarks. After all components of the course have been completed and assessed, the IB assigns a score on a scale of 1-7 for each academic group. A student may earn up to an additional three points for superior performance on TOK and EE requirements. The highest possible score is 45 points.

An IB student will earn the Diploma under the following conditions:

- The candidate's total points are 24 or more, including earning at least 2 points in all courses.
- The candidate has earned passing grades in both the Theory of Knowledge and Extended Essay courses.
- The candidate has earned 12 or more combined points on the three HL classes.
- The candidate has earned 9 or more combined points on the three SL classes.
- CAS requirements have been satisfactorily completed.

there is an established process by which students can request an appeal of their IB external exam results or re-take an exam.

TOK And EE Points Matrix

		Theory of Knowledge					Failing Condition
		A	B	C	D	E/N	
Extended Essay	A	3	3	2	2	Failing Condition	
	B	3	2	2	1		
	C	2	2	1	0		
	D	2	1	0	0		
	E/N	Failing Condition					

Additional Options for IB Study

Occasionally an IB student requests a class that is not offered at WSA but is available at the SL level online through Pamoja. Pamoja is the only organization authorized to offer online IB courses.

The WSA IB Coordinator must approve participation in an online Pamoja course. Successful participation in a Pamoja course requires substantial discipline and organization on the part of the student. The courses require additional fees, and students are not allowed to take more than one online course. An online course is only approved if the student meets the course prerequisites, has demonstrated excellent scholarship and has a dedicated class period during the school day for this course in their schedule.

IB Diploma Program Fees

The IB organization charges fees for taking part in its programs. As a result, there are additional costs associated with participation in the IB Diploma Program. The fee is approximately \$125 per exam.

Students may choose to take one of their IB Courses through Pamoja, the only online IB School. There is an additional cost for these options at approximately \$1100 per year for two years.

Requests, complaints, and decision appeals

WSA supports each student in their individual decisions about IB DP submissions. Decisions about enrollment in IB courses are made collaboratively by the students, guardians, teachers, and IB Coordinator. On a case-by-case basis requests and complaints are treated by the IB Coordinator. Students and their guardians initiate the request by email or in conversation with the IB Coordinator. Students can initiate a decision appeal after exam scores are released by emailing the IB Coordinator before July 31 of the exam year.

Glossary

Creativity, Action and Service Learning (CAS) - co-curricular activities required as a core component for the Diploma Programme.

CAS Coordinator – Georgia Chehade - WSA assigns one faculty member to be the CAS coordinator who maintains the CAS records and reflections for each IB student. The CAS coordinator works with a student's Advocate to capture the reflections.

CAS Learning Outcomes - IB has established a set of eight learning outcomes that students must demonstrate achievement of through the course of their CAS work.

Extended Essay (EE) - a written paper of approximately 4,000 words on a topic of special interest to the student. The EE is written over the course of the junior and senior years as a core component of the Diploma Program

External Assessment (EA) - Assessments given at WSA, but scored off campus and only by the IB Organization's examiners. All external assessments take place during May of the senior year in a formal exam structure.

Higher Level (HL) and Standard Level (SL) - WSA offers two levels of depth for IB courses. Higher Level courses study in more depth and over more teaching hours. Three courses are required to be taken at the Higher Level and three courses are taken at the Standard Level.

IB Diploma Candidate - Students in the 11th and 12th grade who are intending to take six exams at the end of the senior year and complete CAS, TOK, and EE requirements.

IB Diploma Coordinator – Catherine Freeman - WSA assigns an overall coordinator of the Diploma Programme. This individual serves as the primary point of contact for IB questions and advising.

IB Diploma Course Student - Students in the 11th and 12th grade who are intending to take exams in one or more of the six IB courses for an IB certificate and/or qualify for a certificate in CAS, TOK, and EE.

IB Diploma - The Diploma awarded by the International Baccalaureate organization after successful completion of the six IB courses plus TOK, CAS and EE.

Internal Assessment - Course work, other than the cumulative exam, that is graded by WSA and also reviewed or scored by the IB organization.

Theory of Knowledge (TOK) - class is a core component of the Diploma Programme. It explores the relationship among the various disciplines through critical reflection and analysis of the knowledge acquired.



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