

# INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE DIPLOMA PROGRAMME HANDBOOK

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2023 - 2024



INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF  
**FLORENCE**



# IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is 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.

As IB learners we 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.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



<p style="text-align: center;"><b>The International School of Florence</b> <b>International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) Handbook</b> <b>2023 - 2024</b></p>
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This handbook provides information, policy, and procedures about the academic programs -- including the **International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)** -- offered to Grade 11-12 students at ISF, and must be read in conjunction with the ISF Parent-Student Handbook which also provides additional details on areas such as behavior, communication protocols, and so forth.

The educational philosophy of the **International Baccalaureate** is found in their mission statement:

*"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 organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.*

*These 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."*

Head of School:	Sharyn Baddeley
Upper School Principal:	Carey Killen
IBDP Coordinator:	Jason Blackstone
CAS Coordinator:	Inka Szablinski
College Counsellor:	Rhonda Carr

## ISF Graduation Pathways

As students consider their academic plans at ISF and beyond, it is essential to note that ISF has three graduation pathway options. Students can choose from among:

1. the (*full*) International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)
2. the accredited US High School Diploma *PLUS* one or more IBDP Course Certificates
3. the accredited US High School Diploma

## Choosing the right option

In Grade 10, students will be introduced to the graduation pathways available at ISF in several sessions which will also include an information session about the subjects available at ISF in Grades 11-12. Attendance at these meetings is **vital** if students and their parents are to make fully informed choices regarding both the most suitable graduation pathway and the most suitable course selections for that pathway.

Subject choices are made during Grade 10 and are binding; a subject or level change may be made only on college counsellor and/or teacher recommendation, provided that there is space available in the new subject or level and that such a change is made in a timely manner (usually no later than the first weeks of Grade 11).

## Full IB Diploma Programme (option 1 above) entrance recommendations

1. For existing ISF Grade 10 students:
  - a. The philosophy of the IB is to allow **any** student to register for the Programme and at ISF this philosophy is supported following specific teacher consent form and recommended entry criteria below.
  - b. Performance at a 6 or 7 level in a single subject in 10th grade indicates that a student should normally meet the academic demands of an IB Higher Level in that subject area, while performance at a 5 level in a single subject in 10th grade indicates that a student should normally meet the academic demands of an IB Standard Level in that subject area.
  - c. Students gaining less than a 4 average in Grade 10 will normally be advised **not** to take the full IB Diploma.
2. New enrollments (students enrolling into Grade 11):
  - a. Students will be admitted to the programme following a review of their past records which must meet the rigors of standard college preparatory curriculum
3. Transfer students (students enrolling into Grade 12):
  - a. from *other* IBDP schools: a transfer is potentially possible to continue in the full DP, but only when there is a close alignment with ISF offerings
  - b. from *non*-IBDP schools: these students will complete Grade 11 classes during their Grade 12 year

## Overview: What is the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP)?

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme is a rigorous pre-university course of study, leading to examinations, that meets the needs of the highly motivated and academically-inclined secondary school student. Designed as a comprehensive curriculum that allows its graduates to fulfill requirements of the various national systems of education, the IB is based on the pattern of no single country. It provides students of different linguistic,

cultural and educational backgrounds with the intellectual, social and critical perspectives necessary for the adult world that lies ahead of them.

As such, it is a demanding course which will exceed the boundaries of the school day, typically including work which will need to be completed during school holidays.

The international pass rate for the IB Diploma from year to year is a bit under 80%. Keeping this in mind, it is important to note that not all students are expected to earn the IB Diploma.

Students must fulfill all requirements stipulated by the IB and sit the final externally assessed examinations to be awarded this qualification (see specifics below). In summary, this option is determined by the IB with ISF having little control.

### **Overview: What is the US High School Diploma *PLUS* one or more IBDP Course Certificates?**

This option is the US High School Diploma (as outlined below and which is accredited externally by MSA-CEES) with students fulfilling all DP requirements for the chosen course (or courses) in question, including sitting the final IB exam. The flexibility comes in not being required to fulfill the overall DP programmes requirements, such as a prescribed combination of Standard Level (SL) vs Higher Level (HL) courses, and not having to complete other DP requirements, such as the Extended Essay (EE). In summary, this option provides students with some flexibility and also gives them the potential to earn a IB course certificate for their chosen course(s).

### **Overview: What is the US High School Diploma?**

This is an internal ISF program accredited externally by MSA-CEES. Students study in the same classes as full IB DP students and are responsible for the same content and complete the same assessments (such as the Internal Assessment (IA) for each course) but have much more choice in terms of their subject combinations and Standard Level (SL) vs Higher Level (HL) subjects, such as the possibility of taking 6 SL classes. Graduation is determined fully by the ISF Graduation policy (as outlined below). In summary, this option provides students most flexibility but may require further investigation regarding individual university admissions requirements.

### **ISF US High School Diploma and Graduation Requirements**

ISF is authorized to offer an accredited American-style (US) High School Diploma. This is awarded at Graduation following a competition of the required credits and other school requirements, and symbolizes successful completion of High School; that is, Grades 9-12.

A total of **24** credits is required for graduation with the ISF High School Diploma. 1 year of classes in a single subject is equivalent to 1 credit. 1 credit is awarded with a year grade average of 3 or more (or a D in the case of TOK).

- 4 credits of Language A;
- 3 credits of Language B;
- 3 credits of Individuals and Societies;
- 3 credits of Experimental Sciences;
- 3 credits of Mathematics;
- 8 credits of Elective classes including but not limited to Art, Music and Theatre



Students who do not achieve 12 credits or more at the end of Grade 10 will not be able to pursue the IB Diploma Programme, but may be able to follow the US High School Diploma route following consultation with the Vice Principal Learning and the DP Coordinator.

The school's policy for promoting a student into the next grade or for graduating from Grade 12 requires a minimum of 90% attendance during the school year. Special circumstances will be considered on a case-by-case basis and decisions will always be made in the best interests of the student, considering both academic and social-emotional impact.

Considering the importance of regular attendance, the school will make the final decisions regarding potential student absences.

CAS is required for all students in grades 11-12, regardless of their graduation pathway.

TOK is mandatory for *all* students in Grade 11 as it is a course developing critical thinking skills which are highly applicable regardless of being in or out of the DP as a programme.

US High School Diploma students will:

- Get credit (0.5 per year) for TOK in Grade 11
- Be required to earn a minimum passing grade of D in TOK in Grade 11 based on regular class assessments.

### **The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IBDP) at ISF**

The IB Diploma is an extremely demanding course both for teachers and students alike. It is designed for students who are hard-working and self-motivated and no amount of teaching can replace these vital ingredients for success.

It is expected that students take responsibility for themselves and realize that no one is going to complete work for them. The consequences of poor performance in the class will be poor exam results. Enrolment is ***not*** a guarantee of success. Students attending and passing IB Diploma courses at ISF, and who fulfill other passing requirements as outlined above, will earn the ISF US High School Diploma, regardless of whether they sit, or pass, their final IB Diploma exams. It should be noted that ***all*** courses in 11th and 12th Grade at ISF are IB Diploma classes.

Students with special educational needs must be professionally tested and enrolled in our Learning Support Programme ***before*** embarking on the Programme to allow for the requesting of special consideration during examinations from the IB. Parents are required to provide all necessary documentation.

The IB Diploma is externally awarded on the successful completion of all the components of the course by the IB organization. Although it is an extremely demanding course, the rewards of success are the recognition by, and entry into, the majority of Higher Education Institutes throughout the world. Students and parents should ensure that the subjects they have chosen are accepted by the universities and colleges that they wish to attend after leaving school ***before*** selecting and starting the course.

The faculty at ISF has experience in teaching the IB (ISF was the 308th school to register as an IB School; there are now over 3,421 schools offering the IB Diploma in 157 countries) and a good rate of success. They ***cannot*** compensate for lack of motivation or effort but they aim to create the conditions that allow students to ***succeed at the highest level that their ability allows.***

## The IBDP Curriculum at ISF

<b>Group 1</b>	<b>Language A (Studies in Language and Literature)</b>	
	English A: Language & Literature	HL/SL
	English A: Literature	HL/SL
	Italian A: Language & Literature	HL/SL
	Italian A: Literature	HL/SL
<b>Group 2</b>	<b>Language Acquisition</b>	
	English B	HL/SL
	French B	HL/SL
	Italian B	HL/SL
	Italian ab initio	SL only
	Spanish B	HL/SL
<b>Group 3</b>	<b>Individuals and Societies</b>	
	Art History	SL only
	Business Management	HL/SL
	Global Politics	HL/SL
	History	HL/SL
<b>Group 4</b>	<b>Experimental Sciences</b>	
	Biology	HL/SL
	Chemistry	HL/SL
	Physics	HL/SL
	Sports, Exercise, and Health Science (SEHS)	SL only
<b>Group 5</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	
	Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches	HL/SL
	Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation	HL/SL
<b>Group 6</b>	<b>Arts and Electives</b>	
	Theatre	HL/SL
	Visual Arts	HL/SL
	or a <i>second</i> course from Group 2 or Group 3 or Group 4	HL/SL
<b>Interdisciplinary course</b>		
	Environmental Systems & Societies (ESS)	SL only
	(may be offered as either a Group 3 <i>or</i> Group 4 option)	

One subject from *each* of the above Groups must be chosen for the two years of the Diploma Programme. At least three and not more than four must be taken at Higher Level (HL) and the others at Standard Level (SL). Please note that HL courses represent 240 teaching hours while SL courses represent 150 teaching hours.

The school strives to satisfy as far as possible the requirements of its student body, which changes each year, but lack of numbers and other timetabling restrictions may further limit the proposed choices (including offering the HL version of a class) that are illustrated above.

In addition to completing the six subjects, each Diploma candidate must meet the following requirements:

### **Extended Essay**

A substantial piece of independent work of no more than 4,000 words in an area that interests the student and in one of the subjects of the IB curriculum. Additional points may be awarded to the final six subject score -- see section "The IB Marking System".

## Theory of Knowledge (ToK)

A course in the Theory of Knowledge. Additional points may be awarded -- see section "The IB Marking System".

## Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS)

Activities that broadly cover the above mentioned areas are completed over the two years of the Programme, starting in September of the first year - see CAS section for more details.

## Selecting Correct Classes for Specific University Programmes

In Grade 10 students need to make informed choices about their future IB subjects as this can have a direct effect on the choice of university/college degree programme. This is even *more* important if students are choosing to go to university in the UK. It is strongly advised, therefore, to research several universities to check their general entrance requirements for specific subjects.

Students can check with the College Counsellor for degree course descriptions and entrance requirements and students can also check the site <https://www.ucas.com> for exact requirements at specific universities in the UK.

Those classes listed below are generally **requirements** for UK universities and are also *highly recommended* for the USA.

For the rest of the world, including France, Italy, and the Netherlands, the universities tend to be autonomous and parents/students need to check specific IB requirements by contacting the universities directly.

The courses and classes listed below are for *general guidance only* – students and parents are strongly advised to check with the College Counsellor and the universities/colleges of their choice to confirm admission requirements.

GENERAL RULE	If you wish to take a subject you are studying at school at university level, you should take that subject at HL.
Architecture	Art and Math and/or Physics at HL
Bio-Technology/Engineering	Biology HL and another science at HL; usually Math at SL
Business Management	<i>Some</i> may require Math at HL
Chemical Engineering	Usually require Chemistry at HL with Math and Physics at HL
Economics	Math HL
Environmental Science	At least one Science at HL, usually Chemistry
Law/Politics/Philosophy	History HL
Mechanical/Electrical/Aeronautical/Automobile Engineering	Math and Physics at HL
Medicine/Dentistry	Chemistry HL and another Science at HL, usually Biology; Math at HL or SL
Modern Languages (French, Italian, Spanish)	Usually require Language B HL if you want to study that specific language at university
New language (Arabic, Russian, Greek, Japanese, Mandarin)	Check with the university but usually require a Modern Language at HL



<b>Physiotherapy/Nursing</b>	Usually require Biology at HL with some universities also needing Chemistry at SL
<b>PPE (Philosophy, Politics, Economics)</b>	History HL advisable; Math HL preferred
<b>Psychology</b>	May require Biology or Chemistry at HL; some may require Math HL
<b>Veterinary Science</b>	Biology and Chemistry at HL; Math at HL or SL

## **Creativity, Activity, and Service (CAS)**

The General Regulations of the IB stipulate that all IB Diploma students must engage in extra-curricular activities to be eligible for the award of the Diploma. This is a very important aspect in the education of the “whole person” and is one of the “core” activities in the whole IB Programme. These activities must take place during the IB Diploma course that starts in September; therefore, activities completed during the summer prior to the commencement of the course (i.e. September of 11th Grade) are inadmissible.

Each Diploma student must keep a diary to record and reflect on the various activities undertaken. Proof of participation in activities is mandatory. Each student’s CAS diary will be reviewed and evaluated at regular intervals by the CAS Coordinator.

The three areas involved are:

### **Creativity**

This includes regular individual or group activities in any form of art or craft, drama, debate, music, dance, film-making, photography, chess, etc. Such activities may be done outside the school as long as the CAS Coordinator is assured of the student’s regular participation and attendance.

### **Activity**

This may include participation in organized school activities and also serious interests in which the student has outside of school, subject to the approval of the CAS Coordinator.

### **Service**

The student’s community service, both within the school as an officer or member of committees, and outside school helping the less privileged and less fortunate or integrating with the local community, is taken into high consideration. This may be done during holiday time.

Evaluation will be based on a written report to be given to the CAS Coordinator. All students should bear in mind the relevance and importance of CAS activities. Both ISF and the IB organization consider such activities very significant and relevant to the development of the “whole” person. ISF expects that *all* 11th and 12th grade students participate in CAS activities, whether or not they are pursuing a full IB Diploma, as CAS participation and completion is a requirement of the ISF Diploma. CAS activities start in September of 11th Grade and must finish by March of 12th Grade.

## Examples of CAS activities at ISF

### During School Hours:

Tutoring: Math, Italian and English language

Classroom assistants: computer lab, Junior School Art, kindergarten, pre-school, 2nd grade physical education

Other: school office help, newsletter distribution, counsellor's assistant, school waste paper recycling, library assistant, journalism.

### After School:

yearbook, charity fundraising activities, sports, visits to S.Teresa retirement home, church service, drama, Model United Nations (MUN), PA activities, musical activities, Scouts, hospital art project, veterinarian's help, Soccorso Clowns, Corri La Vita, Legambiente.

## **IB Diploma Recognition by the Italian Ministry of Education**

For the IB Diploma candidates wishing to apply to **Italian Universities**, the Italian Ministry of Education has officially approved the IB Diploma programmes outlined below.

All three programmes are offered at ISF, with the subsequent IB Diplomas being recognized as the equivalent to the Italian "liceo linguistico," "liceo scientifico," or "liceo scienze umane." In order for the particular category of liceo to be recognized, one assigned class must be taken at HL. This class is noted below with "HL" in bold.

According to the Italian Ministry of Education, one of the three programmes below must be followed by those IB Diploma candidates wishing to apply to an Italian University.

With their increased autonomy, however, Italian Universities may choose to accept other programme combinations. If a student wishes to follow another programme, it is *his* responsibility to present the programme to the Italian university of his choice for approval **prior to selecting and embarking on the course**.

Other countries and individual institutions in Italy may have similar restrictions. These restrictions must be checked **by students and parents prior to selecting and starting the IB course**.

In addition, although the Ministry documents do not specifically require it, ISF strongly recommends that all students wishing to apply to Italian universities take Italian A (either Language & Literature or Literature) in order to fulfill the Group 1 requirement below.

The IB Diploma can be legalized by the IB organization in Geneva after the end of the course for countries concerned. Legalization requests will be made during the second year of study.

	<b>Liceo Scientifico</b>	<b>Liceo Linguistico</b>	<b>Liceo Scienze Umane</b>
<b>Group 1</b>	Language A (ISF strongly recommends Italian A)	Language A <b>HL</b> (ISF strongly recommends Italian A)	Language A (ISF strongly recommends Italian A)

<b>Group 2</b>	Language B (or 2nd Lang. A)	Language B (or 2nd Lang. A)	Language B (or 2nd Lang. A)
<b>Group 3</b>	History	History	History <b>HL</b>
<b>Group 4</b>	Biology, Chemistry, or Physics	Biology, Chemistry, ESS, or Physics	Biology, Chemistry, ESS, or Physics
<b>Group 5</b>	Math <b>HL</b>	Math SL	Math SL
<b>Group 6</b>	Chemistry (only if not taking Chemistry in Group 4), ESS, or Art	Third Language	Art

(The above references the documents Decreto del Presidente della Repubblica 30 ottobre 1986, n. 738, further updated with art. 2 legge n.738/86 D.M. 18 ottobre 2010 applicativo del D.P.R. 2 agosto 2010 n.164.)

### **The IB Marking System**

The grading scheme in use for IB examinations is from 7 to 1 and is described as follows:

- 7: excellent
- 6: very good
- 5: good
- 4: satisfactory
- 3: mediocre
- 2: poor
- 1: very poor

In many subjects, a part of the Programme ranging from 20 to 30% may be assessed by the subject teacher. This assessment is externally moderated by IB examiners and marks may be adjusted.

## Core points

A maximum of three Core (or *additional*) points may be added to the total score awarded for the individual subjects based on performance in the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge. Performance in each of these requirements will be assessed using the following scale: excellent (A), good (B), satisfactory (C), mediocre (D), and elementary (E). Additional points will be awarded according to a candidate's combined performance in both areas, using the following matrix:

		Theory of Knowledge					
		Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	No Grade N
<b>Extended Essay</b>	Grade A	3	3	2	2	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade B	3	2	2	1	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade C	2	2	1	0	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade D	2	1	0	0	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	Grade E	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition
	No Grade N	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition	Failing Condition

## Conditions for the award of the IB Diploma

The IB Diploma will be awarded to a candidate provided all the following requirements have been met:

- a. CAS requirements have been met;
- b. The candidate's total points are 24 or more;
- c. There is no "N" [1] awarded for theory of knowledge, the extended essay or for a contributing subject;
- d. There is no grade E awarded for theory of knowledge and/or the extended essay;
- e. There is no grade 1 awarded in a subject/level;
- f. There are no more than two grade 2s awarded (HL or SL);
- g. There are no more than three grade 3s or below awarded (HL or SL);
- h. The candidate has gained 12 points or more on HL subjects (for candidates who register for four HL subjects, the three highest grades count);
- i. The candidate has gained 9 points or more on SL subjects (candidates who register for two SL subjects must gain at least 5 points at SL).

Please note that a maximum of three (3) examinations sessions is allowed in which to satisfy the requirements for the award of the IB Diploma.

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[1] An "N" grade will mean one or more of the following: withdrawal from the examination; absence from one or all parts of the examination; failure to meet one or more of the examination requirements; breach of regulations (e.g. being found guilty of malpractice, including plagiarism, collusion, etc.).

## **English Level Requirements**

Apart from Language B subjects and Italian A, all DP subjects at ISF are taught in English. Students who enter the school at the beginning of the DP will be required to demonstrate evidence of a sufficient level of academic English to access the program. This will include a WIDA Screening Test and evidence from official school records showing English language proficiency.

## **Language A Options**

ISF offers both English A and Italian A courses to its students. ISF also supports the student choice of taking a Language A subject in their best language, if this is not either English or Italian. Whenever a minimum number of students has been met for a particular Language A course (e.g. French A: Literature), the school will investigate the possibility of a taught class in that Language A. In this case, the subject would be taught as part of the regular DP subject offerings and, therefore, be covered by school tuition. Where this is impossible, the school offers a "school supported self-taught" option for Language A: Literature. In this latter case, however, the cost of the language expert would be the family's responsibility.

## **Academic Progress**

Monitoring the academic progress of our students is the key to identifying problems early and finding solutions that satisfy the needs of all concerned. Teachers may send email progress reports at any point if they wish to alert parents to a problem, but it is less likely at the start of the class as it is difficult to assess students during the first weeks of the IB course.

The first teacher / parent and student conference day in Grade 11 will most likely be the first communication of student progress, which gives parents the opportunity to talk to all of the teachers, together with their children.

There is a fixed procedure for highlighting students with potential problems:

### **Grade 11**

Students receiving grades that reflect either an ISF or a DP failing condition (fewer than 12 points in HL subjects, a 2 in any subject, fewer than 24 total points, etc.) on their 1st trimester report cards will have such scores highlighted to their parents by the IB Coordinator so that appropriate action can be taken to improve results.

Students who repeat such scores for two consecutive trimesters may be considered to be at risk of failing for the year and will likely be counseled against their pursuit of a complete IB Diploma.

For unconditional entry into the second year of the full Diploma Programme each student is required to score a total of at least 24 points in the final trimester of the first year and/or in the end-of-year average.

In practice such cases will be highlighted earlier as explained above and a 'provisional' decision regarding full Diploma suitability will be taken in consultation with both teachers and parents after the second trimester and by the end of the year.

## **Grade 12**

Students receiving grades that reflect either an ISF or a DP failing condition (fewer than 12 points in HL subjects, a 2 in any subject, fewer than 24 total points, etc.) on their 1st trimester report cards will have such scores highlighted to their parents by the IB Coordinator so that appropriate action can be taken to improve results and ensure continued enrollment in the full Diploma.

The above procedures are designed to give students the best chance of success in the IB Diploma. While ISF believes in giving each student an opportunity to pursue this programme, we also equally believe in ensuring that this programme will lead to student success.

### **11th and 12th Grade Report Cards**

11th and 12th Grade receive written reports as follows:

11th Grade:

- First Trimester (mid December)
- Second Trimester (late March)
- Third Trimester (late June)

Each trimester result in 11th Grade is weighted as 25% of the end-of-year grade, with the final exam making up the final 25%.

12th Grade:

- First Trimester (mid December)
- Mock Exam Report (early February)
- Second / Third Trimester (early May)

In 12th Grade, the First trimester is weighted at 35%, the Second / Third trimester at 40%, and the mock exams at 25% of the end-of-year grade.

### **ISF DP Assessment**

ISF DP Teachers present to students the assessment criteria for each component of their course. This usually occurs in the first weeks of teaching and /or immediately before starting a particular component of the course.

ISF DP assessment tasks are assessed using the DP criteria that most closely correspond to a specific DP component. ISF DP assessment uses the most appropriate grade boundaries, as decided in departments and based on the IB's published grade boundaries, which are communicated to students in a written and /or electronic format. If an ISF DP assessment task does not exactly correspond to a DP component, the grading criteria for this assessment will nevertheless be communicated to students.

Grade 11 DP assessment criteria and boundaries may be adjusted slightly as decided in departments to emphasize the building of skills over final competence. It is usual practice that by the beginning of Grade 12, IB final grade boundaries will be applied to internal work.



In general, it is expected that ISF DP trimester content will include a mixture of formative and summative assessment. The frequency of this per trimester is decided in departments, but the expectation is that each trimester grade will be based on at least two summative assessments.

Regarding DP Internal Assessment (IA), please note that while teachers are expected to give feedback to students on first drafts of the IA (including general advice about where and how to improve with references to the grading criteria), teachers are not permitted by the IB to edit these IA drafts in any way.

Further details regarding ISF assessment practices can be found in the ISF Assessment Policy.

## **Predicted Grades**

Students in the IB Diploma receive an IB Predicted Grade for each class in late March of 12th Grade, about six weeks before their final exams, which is reported to the IB. This IB Predicted Grade takes into account the students' progress throughout the course, with particular emphasis on Internal Assessment (IA) performance, the mock exams, and other major assessments over the two years of the class. The purpose of the IB Predicted Grade is to give the IB a final indication of how students should perform overall in their courses, something that can protect them in the unlikely event that they are not able to complete a part of an exam due to illness or accident, or in case an exam is misplaced in transit to, or at, the IB exam center.

Increasingly, universities around the world are asking IB schools for Predicted Grades as part of the college application process. Considering that the college application process usually begins at the end of 11th grade and is completed by January of 12th grade, most classes will not have finished their IAs and no class will have completed the Mock Exams by the time universities need these grades, making it extremely difficult for teachers to provide Predicted Grades so early in 12th grade.

ISF, therefore, has instituted what we have called Preliminary University Predicted Grades, to distinguish them from the official IB Predicted Grades described above.

Students in the IB can calculate their Preliminary University Predicted Grades in June of 11th grade as follows:

- $\text{Grade 11 trimester results } (T1 + T2 + T3) \div 3 = \text{Grade 11 trimester average}$
- Grade 11 end-of-year exam
- $(\text{Grade 11 trimester average} + \text{Grade 11 end-of-year exam}) \div 2 = \text{Preliminary University Predicted Grade}$ 
  - Preliminary University Predicted Grades are used by the college counsellor for applications submitted before the December break

After Grade 12 Trimester 1 reports have been published, the University PG is then updated as follows:

- $\text{Preliminary University Predicted Grade} \times .75$
- $\text{G12 Trimester 1 results} \times .25$
- $(\text{Preliminary University Predicted Grade} \times .75) + (\text{G12 Trimester 1 results} \times .25) = \text{Final University Predicted Grade}$ 
  - Final University Predicted Grades are used by the college counsellor for applications submitted after 15 December

The purpose of this process is to ensure that the University Predicted Grades are built on previous student achievement, enabling transparency and avoiding predictions based on student lobbying and unrealistic wishful thinking.

## **Student Commitment**

As a school we feel the following points constitute the *minimum* commitment for IB students:

### **Attendance**

It is expected that IB students will attend at least 90% of their classes. All absences are to be justified by a note or medical certificate, in accordance with the school attendance policy. The consequences of missed school time are often poor grades. Students going on school-organised trips must attend the last day of school before the trip and the first day of school after the trip. Students are expected to be at school from 8:15 am until 3:30 pm (Mon, Wed, Thur, Fri) on a Tuesday 8:15 to 2:15.

### **Attitude and behaviour**

All students are expected to cooperate with teachers and to work in, and out of, class without the continued supervision of teachers. Failure to do so, or disruption of classes, will result in a review of the student's status. Students should not expect always to sit next to, or work in a group with, their friends and should accept directions on seating and group composition. The IB and ISF put a large emphasis on the ability to work with others.

### **Equipment and IT Requirements**

Aside from obvious supplies such as pens, pencils, notebooks, binders, and so forth, and in addition to the required TI-84 calculator for Mathematics and Science courses, all students must have access to a reliable computer and printer. This is very important because the majority of ISF and IB work must be completed on a computer. Furthermore, a working printer is essential if students are to respect deadlines for their assignments (a broken printer is not an acceptable excuse for late work!). Finally, Internet access is a requirement in most IB courses.

### **Organization**

All students need to organize themselves for each class with the required equipment as suggested by the teacher. Each student should use diary -- whether electronic or paper -- in which they record homework, tests and other requirements. Though the IB teachers try to spread work as evenly as possible it is inevitable that students will experience 'busy' periods. Keeping up to date with assignments and not leaving anything to 'the last minute' is vital. This self-organization is one of the challenges of the IB Diploma. It must be noted that three to four hours of study time each night is expected of all IB students, so they must be willing and able to organize their time.

### **Punctuality**

Students should not be late to class without a compelling reason. Collecting books, making telephone calls, etc. should all be done either before or after the class in the student's own time.

### **Submission of work**

Work must be submitted on the day it is due. Late work may be marked down for ISF report card assessment purposes. Students who are absent are fully responsible for finding out about missed course content and homework assignments

from their classmates or teachers before the work is due. If a student is absent for an extended period of time, an individual homework plan may be worked out with teachers and the IB Coordinator.

## **IB Internal Assessment Deadlines and Dates**

A calendar of IB Internal Assessment deadlines is provided to students, teachers, and families in September of the second year of the IB. Teachers work to ensure that all assignments can be successfully completed by the deadline date by providing guidance, input, and assistance before the final copies of assessment are due.

On deadline days, students must hand in final and complete copies of their work to the IB Coordinator at the beginning of school, before 8:15 (in some cases, the submission of work may be completed through ManageBac). If a student fails to respect a deadline, he will be placed on immediate external suspension (that is, the student will be asked to leave the school) until the work is completed and a finished copy (electronic or printed, as required) is received.

Please note that in the case of absence on an official due date, a medical certificate will be required from the student's doctor in order for the absence to be considered excused. Without this medical certificate, any assessments, including the assignment that was to be handed in, will be given a zero for ISF grading purposes.

In addition, there are several dates over the two years of the Diploma that indicate not turning in a finished product, but completing an oral exam or completing in-school work (e.g. the Group 4 Individual Investigation). Attendance on these dates is obligatory as such evaluations are a required component for the classes and cannot be repeated.

## **Plagiarism, Academic Misconduct, and Academic Honesty**

Plagiarism is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate's own. During the first year of the IB, meetings with students are held to ensure that students are familiar with the conventions for acknowledging sources and for paraphrasing, as well as ensuring that students are familiar with the consequences of plagiarism.

Due to increased incidences of plagiarism around the world, teachers will usually insist that rough drafts be handed in to ensure authenticity. Students may also be asked to complete work in class under test conditions. If rough drafts are not handed in, work may not be graded or authenticated.

If a student is found to have copied all or part of another student's work or copied/paraphrased information from a source without appropriate citation, they will receive a zero for the work and a letter will be sent to inform parents of the situation. Students who allow their work to be copied will also receive a zero for the work and a letter home (this would be defined as collusion).

In either case, a first-time incident of plagiarism may result in suspension from the school, at the discretion of the Administration. A repeated incident of plagiarism will result in suspension.

It should be noted that for every assignment submitted to the IB, each student must sign documentation that attests that the assignment is the "authentic work" of the student. The signing of such documentation should not, of course, be taken lightly.

If it is discovered that any official work for the IB, *including drafts*, is not the authentic work of the student, **the student may be withdrawn from the Diploma Programme and may also automatically fail the IB course or component in question, in addition to any ISF disciplinary consequences.**

In addition, the IB places plagiarism within a broader definition of academic dishonesty known as academic misconduct (formerly known as “malpractice”). Academic misconduct includes the following:

- **plagiarism** (the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the student’s own; that is, copying, summarizing, or paraphrasing information from a source without appropriate citation)
- **collusion** (such as allowing one’s work to be copied by another student, whether at ISF or elsewhere)
- **duplication of work** (such as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or IB Diploma requirements)
- **any other behavior** that gains an unfair advantage for a student or that affects the results of another student (e.g. using outside help for the researching and writing of assessments or taking unauthorized material into an examination room)

A student found guilty of academic misconduct by the International Baccalaureate Organization is considered to have breached regulations and **will not receive the diploma**.

If a student submits work that is not his own for IB assessment, the responsibility lies entirely with the student himself. Please note that both ISF and the IB have no means of knowing if an act of academic misconduct was deliberate or not on the part of the student and, consequently, intent cannot be taken into account.

**It is most important, therefore, to ensure through proper citation that the reader of a student’s work is able to clearly distinguish between the words/ideas of the student and the words/ideas of others.**

## **College Guidance for Students**

College counselling at the International School of Florence aims to enable students to make clear and informed post-secondary choices to match students’ profile and goals.

Developing a post secondary plan is an extremely important process, one that will have an enormous impact on a student’s life. It will affect the place one lives, the friends one makes and possibly one’s future. Selecting universities and courses of study are exciting and challenging yet it can be a very difficult decision with thousands of universities all over the world to choose from.

Where to start looking? How to choose? How to apply? What’s a personal statement? What’s a GAP year? These and other essential questions can be answered by meeting with the counsellor.

### **Below are some key dates and timelines for students:**

At the beginning of the year, the counsellor publishes a suggested standardized testing schedule and a list of useful websites related to the college search and the admission process. Throughout the year, information sessions on relevant topics are offered to students e.g. how to choose a university; studying in the US versus the UK; how to write an essay / a personal statement; how to survive the college application process; taking a gap year.

### **Ninth Grade:**

Students are introduced to career options through informal interest inventory and personality assessments in the spring. They learn about the importance of academic achievement and initiative (including summer activities) to maximize college options.

**Tenth Grade:**

In spring, when students are choosing what IB programme to follow, the counsellor meets with students and parents to discuss course selections, to ensure that they match with future university plans. Grade 10 students are encouraged to take careers testing to help in choosing their IB subjects.

**Eleventh Grade (IB1):**

Students must start their college research as early as possible. They should plan college visits during school breaks. Attending university presentations helps students confirm their choices or explore options that they might not have previously considered. Students are also encouraged to meet regularly with the counsellor so they can build a list of universities/course(s) by the end of the year. Drafting of the university essay/personal statement starts in late spring.

**Twelfth Grade (IB2):**

Starting in September, the counsellor meets with all seniors to work on college/university applications, personal statement, references, etc. Students are responsible for keeping track of admission requirements, testing, and application deadlines. They—not their parents or the counsellor—are the universities' contact person for their applications.

**Completed application forms to the College Counsellor by (for IB2 students):**

**15 September** for applications to Oxford & Cambridge, medicine, dentistry and veterinary courses

**1 October** for 'Early Action' and 'Early Decision' (USA); completed forms by the beginning of October

**End of November** for regular USA applications

**First week of December** for UCAS applications for the UK

Application forms can be obtained on-line and by email directly from colleges/universities

## Recent ISF University Destinations

United Kingdom	United States
<p> Aberystwyth University  Bath Spa University  Brunel University London  Cardiff University  City University, London  Durham University  Goldsmiths, University of London  Hull College  Imperial College  Instituto Marangoni (London)  King's College London  Kingston University  London Metropolitan University  London School of Economics  Loughborough University  Manchester Metropolitan University  Newcastle University  Norwich School of Art  Nottingham Trent University  Oxford Brookes University  Queen Margaret University  Queen Mary University of London  Regent's University London  Roehampton University  Royal Holloway, University of London  SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies), London  University of Arts London, Camberwell College of Arts  University of the Arts London, Central Saint Martins  University of the Arts London, London College of Communication  University of Bath  University of Brighton  University of Cambridge  University College London  University of Edinburgh  University of Exeter  University of Glasgow  University of Greenwich  University of Kent  University of Leicester  University of Liverpool  <b>United Kingdom (continued)</b>  University of Manchester  University of Middlesex  University of Nottingham  University of Oxford  University of Richmond  University of St. Andrews  University of Strathclyde  University of Southampton  University of Surrey  University of Sussex  University of Warwick  University of Westminster  University of York    <b>Czech Republic</b>  University of Veterinary and Pharmaceutical Sciences Brno (VFU)    <b>France</b>  American University of Paris  Ecole Polytechnique de Paris  ESCP Europe  Parsons Paris School of Design  Paris Diderot University (Paris VII)  University of Toulouse  Germany  University of Potsdam    <b>Italy</b>  Accademia Costume &amp; Moda </p>	<p> American Musical and Dramatic Academy  American University  Asuza Pacific University  Bard College  Berkeley College of Music  Boston University  Brown University  CalArts, California Institute of the Arts  California Lutheran University  Carnegie Mellon University  Chapman University  College of Holy Cross  Columbia College Chicago  Emerson College  Fashion Institute of Technology  Florida Atlantic University  Florida Gulf Coast State University  Florida Institute of Technology  Fresno State University  Georgetown University  Hampshire College  Hofstra University  James Madison University  Knox College  Lawrence University  Loyola University Chicago  Marist College  McGill University (Canada)  Montana State University, Bozeman  Muhlenberg College  New York University  Northeastern University  Northwestern University  Oklahoma State University  Old Dominion University  Parsons School of Art and Design (New School)  Pennsylvania State University  Pepperdine University  Princeton University  Rhode Island School of Design (RISD)  Rochester Institute of Technology  <b>North America (continued)</b>  Roosevelt University  Rutgers University  St Mary's College of Maryland  St. John's University  Sarah Lawrence College  Seattle Pacific University  Skidmore College  Smith College  Stanford University  Suffolk University  SUNY Duchess  Swarthmore University  Tisch School of the Arts, NYU  Trinity College  Tulane University  University of Alabama  University of Arizona  University of Arizona  University of British Columbia (Canada)  University of California, Berkeley  University of California, Los Angeles  University of California, San Diego  University of California, Santa Cruz  University of Colorado, Boulder  University of Maryland University College  University of Massachusetts at Amherst  University of Michigan  University of Oregon  University of Pennsylvania  University of Seattle </p>



<p> The American University of Rome  Bocconi University  Charles H. Cecil Studios Florence  Istituto Marangoni, Milan  IULM University  John Cabot University, Rome  Luiss Guido Carli, Rome  Polimoda, Florence  Politecnico di Milano  SAE Institute Milano  Sacred Art School Firenze  Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore  Università degli Studi di Firenze  Università degli Studi di Pisa  Università Vita-Salute San Raffaele </p> <p><b>Japan</b> University of Tokyo</p> <p><b>The Netherlands</b> Erasmus University College Erasmus University Rotterdam Groningen University Hotelschool The Hague Leiden University Leiden University College Maastricht University University of Amsterdam (UvA) University College Amsterdam University College Utrecht</p> <p><b>Spain</b> IE University</p> <p><b>Switzerland</b> Ecole Hoteliere de Lausanne Franklin University Glion Institute of Higher Education Les Roches</p>	<p> University of Southern California  University of Texas, San Antonio  University of Toronto  University of Utah (Honors College)  University of Virginia  University of Washington  University of Wisconsin  Villanova University  Wake Forest University  Washington University in St. Louis  Wesleyan University  Yale University </p>
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