

Benefits of the IB

International Baccalaureate

EIB Etoile offers students in Seconde (Year 11) an international option that will enable them to pursue the IB Diploma Programme (International Baccalaureate) with bilingual English-French honours. This excellent teaching option is still rare in France, where there are only 19 accredited schools, most of which offer the programme exclusively in English.

In France, the IB is often confused with the BFI - International French Baccalaureate.

These are two very distinct diplomas. The BFI is dependent on the French curriculum and consists of additional teaching in English in history-geography and literature. The IB, on the other hand, is a full diploma. Based on an international and cross-disciplinary approach, the International Baccalaureate aims to prepare students for a changing world and make them feel like global citizens.

A holistic vision of education, and preparation for excellence in higher education

Although little known in France, the IB curriculum is currently taught in nearly 5,000 schools in over 150 countries around the world. Since its creation in Geneva in 1968, the IB has been based on a unique philosophy in the world of education. Independent of national governments and systems, the IB curriculum has based its programmes and teaching approaches on the best international curriculum and practice. The International Baccalaureate pathway is therefore distinguished by a cross-curricular vision and a highly collaborative, student-centred pedagogical approach.

IB teaching is based on 5 skills, considered to be the pillars of quality teaching, that students must acquire:

- An understanding of and interest in research
- Presentation, written and oral communication skills
- Critical thinking and problem-solving skills
- Time management skills
- International-mindedness and understanding of other cultures

In addition to its international dimension, the advantage of the IB is that it offers a multi-disciplinary curriculum: with no coefficients, all six subjects are taught equally. Unlike the French baccalauréat, which weights its subjects individually despite the abolition of series, the International Baccalaureate encourages students to work equally on all subjects and to develop intellectually, socially, personally and ethically.

Six academic subjects are on the syllabus, with a high level of requirement, and without favouring one over another. Within each subject, students are regularly invited to question knowledge and establish links between the different fields.

In addition, each student must prepare a dissertation presenting in-depth personal research on a topic of their choice. Assisted by a supervisor, students have two years to finalise this work, which counts towards their final diploma, preparing them very effectively for the writing requirements of university dissertations.

Students also have to submit and set up a project called CAS (Créativité Activité Services) to serve a community inside or outside the school. This project is highly supervised and is also assessed. More generally, the IB programmes encourage students to develop their extra-curricular activities, whether they be associative, sporting or artistic. These are all assets for the application forms and personal statements required to enter selective courses, which now, including in France, make the most of applicants' extra-curricular activities.

The IB programme is packed and comprehensive, which explains the success of IB graduates at universities around the world. Alexandra Pion, Deputy Director of EIB Etoile, explains:

"The IB is an extremely effective gateway to university. In many countries, the IB is recognised as a higher qualification than the national diploma. The United Kingdom has integrated it into the UCAS platform and, in the United States, many universities even admit IB graduates directly into their second year."

How is the International Baccalaureate being implemented at EIB Etoile?

EIB Etoile is offering its Seconde students the opportunity to enter the world of the IB thanks to an IB option which will be open from the start of the new school year. The IB option programme includes 6 hours of English, made up of 2 hours of Mathematics, 1 hour of Economics, 2 hours of Literature and 1 hour of MUN debates. The aim is to enable these students to enter the bilingual International Baccalaureate programme in two years from the start of the following academic year. The prerequisite is of course an excellent level of English (B2+ to C1).

At EIB Etoile, students can take the following subjects as part of their 1ère and Terminale IB curriculum:

- Language and literature studies: French or English (equivalent to the student's native language or main language of schooling)
- Language acquisition: French or English (equivalent to the student's second language)
- Individuals and societies: Economics/ History
- Science: Biology/ Physics/ Chemistry
- Mathematics: mathematics AA (pure maths)/ mathematics AI (applied maths)

What are the advantages over the French baccalauréat?

At EIB Etoile, we have chosen to offer the IB as a bilingual option, i.e. with half the teaching in English and half in French, to enable our students to make the most of their bilingualism. With the international option, they will also be able to familiarise themselves in English with mathematics, literature, business vocabulary and eloquence. In 1ère and Terminale, for both years of the diploma programme, students will also be able to choose to take economics or science in English, in addition to maths in English, which will be a major advantage for them in pursuing their studies abroad, much more so than the French International Baccalaureate (BFI), which focuses heavily on literature and civilisation. Students interested in the International Baccalaureate route are in fact students wishing to continue their higher education at prestigious universities whose curricula are taught in English (University of Oxford, University of Bath, McGill, London School of Economics, Kings College, Imperial College etc.). Bilingualism in French and English will be a testament to their extraordinary adaptability and their ability to acquire skills that will prepare them for higher education.

Alexandra Pion concludes:

"The IB with bilingual honours is a very demanding and well-balanced curriculum, reserved for independent students who are socially and intellectually open-minded, and which prepares them in every respect to move with ease into the world of tomorrow that will be theirs. The IB opens up a wide range of possibilities for study abroad, including in science and business."