

STUDENT TESTIMONIAL

“Writing a TOK essay based on one single question and being able to go deeply into it was a wonderful experience.”

Marina Moncada
2016 Diploma Programme graduate
Colegio Montserrat
Barcelona, Spain



Marina Moncada received her IB diploma from Colegio Montserrat in Barcelona, Spain. She began the Diploma Programme (DP) with an interest in science and is now enrolled in medical school.

Why did you originally decide to pursue an IB diploma? What appealed to you about the programme?

The main reason was that I wanted to study abroad. I did some research and found out that by completing the programme, my IB diploma was recognized at the majority of universities around the world. I decided it could be a gratifying experience that will later lead me where I wanted to study. Also, the idea of studying in a holistic way was very attractive to me, because I was used to a very different type of learning.

As an IB student, how did you shape your IB diploma studies to your interests?

When I started the DP, I knew I wanted to study something related to science, but I didn't know what exactly. So, what I did was study mathematics, biology and chemistry as part of my IB diploma and as an extracurricular subject I also studied physics at my school. This way, I didn't close any doors in the future. In the end, I went to medical school, so my choice was not that bad after all.

Did the extended essay, TOK, or CAS prepare you for university?

In my opinion, one of the most valuable courses was theory of knowledge (TOK). I learned to look at things differently and to see diverse perspectives of the same issue. Also, writing a TOK essay based on one single question and being able to go deeply into it was a wonderful experience for me. It was very delightful to finish it and see that it made quite a lot of sense.

The extended essay has been very helpful, too. Back then, I learned how to write a formal essay on a topic (in my case, chemistry). Everything about the extended essay has helped me during university. From the layout to how to write a bibliography. In my opinion, it's something that every student should know how to do before starting university, and the IB diploma prepared me for it. I am very thankful now, although it was quite a challenge when I had to start from scratch.

Who inspired you most as an IB student?

One of the people that was very inspiring for me was my mathematics teacher. He also was the coordinator of the DP. He was always there to help us with anything we needed, and he was very supportive during hard times and when we thought we couldn't do it anymore. He left me, and all of my classmates, with the feeling that if you work hard enough you'll get where you want to be. He always said to us, "don't let the trees block your view of the forest." Back then it was difficult to understand, but having finished the programme I now get it perfectly.

What advice do you have for current IB students that are thinking about a career like yours?

Right now I am studying in medical school. My advice to anyone that wants to become a doctor is that if they really like it, they will be able to do it. Although it is quite a difficult career, in my opinion, the thing you need the most is patience and time. You'll study more hours than you thought you could, but you will enjoy every single minute of the time you spend studying. And it is very satisfying to think that one day you will be able to help someone or even save their lives.

www.ibo.org/recognition