

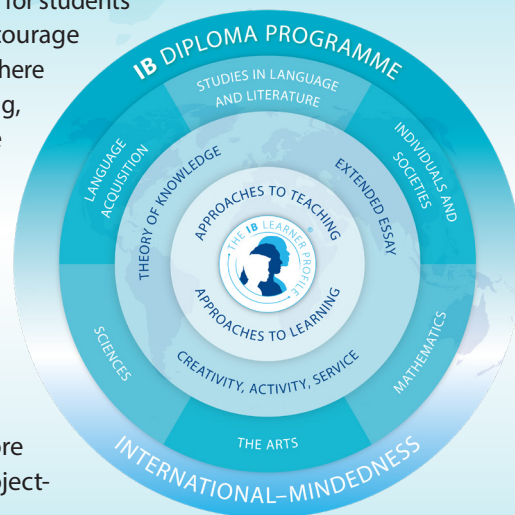
Systems transformation: Leadership for just futures Pilot collaboration with UWC Atlantic College

First assessment 2025

The Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous pre-university course of study designed for students in the 16 to 19 age range. It is a broad-based two-year course that aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable and inquiring, but also caring and compassionate. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging students to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness, and the attitudes necessary for them to respect and evaluate a range of points of view.

Normally, three subjects (and not more than four) are taken at higher level (HL), and the others are taken at standard level (SL). The IB recommends 240 teaching hours for HL subjects and 150 hours for SL. Subjects at HL are studied in greater depth and breadth than at SL. In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, activity, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.

For this pilot, students take three HL subjects, one SL subject and the three core elements. In place of the other two SL subjects, they complete a 300-hour project-based systems transformation course.



I. Course description

Systems transformation: Leadership for just futures is an innovative 300-hour pilot course co-developed by the IB and UWC Atlantic College. Built on three foundational principles of peace, sustainability and experiential learning, the course explores complex systemic challenges around ecological and social justice.

Working in a variety of transdisciplinary and real-world contexts, students grapple with some of today's most pressing issues: how to feed 8 billion people on a warming planet, how to restore and protect the biodiversity of ecosystems, how to transition away from polluting energy sources quickly and equitably, and how to respond to mass displacements and migrations as a result of conflict, climate change and disasters.

Experiential learning is a key part of the approach to this course. In addition to two formal extended projects, students engage in a variety of smaller projects, experiences and community engagement activities through which they practise taking good, principled, collective action.

II. Course aims

The aims of Systems transformation: Leadership for just futures are for students to:

- explore complex systemic challenges around ecological and social justice
- learn how to take good action in complex contested spaces
- develop familiarity with a range of innovative tools and approaches from multiple disciplines

- collaborate in diverse teams and in a range of contexts
- recognize where injustices are built into systems and structures
- challenge harmful narratives and unjust status quos.

III. Subject requirements

For this pilot, students are required to select three HL subjects and one SL subject to study alongside the systems transformation course and the three core elements. To ensure that a reasonable breadth of study is maintained, this selection must include:

- at least one subject from the studies in language and literature or language acquisition subject groups
- no more than two subjects across the studies in language and literature and language acquisition subject groups
- at least one subject from the sciences or mathematics subject groups
- a maximum of two subjects from any subject group.

IV. Curriculum overview

Syllabus component	Teaching hours
<p>Core curriculum</p> <p>The core curriculum introduces students to key topics and tools relating to the transformation of complex systems.</p> <p>The core curriculum consists of six topics.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Narratives • Complex adaptive systems • Understanding power • Othering, belonging and bridging • Futures thinking and design • Regenerative leadership 	100
<p>Inquiry into impact areas</p> <p>This element of the course involves inquiry into four impact areas: food, biodiversity, migration and energy.</p> <p>It is recommended that 15 hours are dedicated to an initial exploration of the four impact areas and 35 hours are dedicated to an “X-phase” where students focus on exploring connections and intersections between the four areas.</p>	50
<p>Impact area specialization</p> <p>This element of the course involves an in-depth exploration of one impact area of the student’s choice. In intentionally diverse teams, students undertake a collective inquiry into one impact area selected from: food, biodiversity, migration or energy.</p> <p>As part of this in-depth exploration of their chosen impact area, students complete two projects—one individual (30 hours) and one collaborative (50 hours)—based on real-world systems interventions in two different contexts.</p>	150
Total teaching hours	300

V. Assessment overview

This pilot utilizes a range of authentic assessment formats that reflect the action-oriented nature and real-world focus of the course. This includes case study, project and portfolio-based assessment tasks. Two of the four tasks (an individual project and a curated extract from a competencies portfolio) are externally assessed by the IB. The other two tasks (a collaborative project and a case study-based task) are internally assessed and externally moderated by the IB.

This 300-hour pilot course is a dual-award course that takes the place of two 150-hour SL subjects. The course is graded on the same 1–7 scale as other IB subjects, and the student is awarded two identical grades based on their performance across the systems transformation course as a whole.

VI. Assessment model

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Weighting of final grade (%)
External		50
Individual project	Students plan and undertake a self-directed intervention on an issue, and in a context, of their choice. They submit a write-up focused on the design and implementation process for the intervention and the application of systems thinking tools.	35
Competencies portfolio	Students curate and annotate a selection of artefacts from their course portfolio. These artefacts evidence the development of competencies drawn from three competency framework headings—principled action, systems thinking and just futures.	15
Internal		50
Collaborative project	In small teams, students plan and undertake a collaborative intervention in a context local to their school. They submit a write-up consisting of a collaboratively authored part focused on the design of the project and an individually authored part focused on the implementation and evaluation of the project.	35
Case study	Students explore an unseen case study related to the core curriculum. Part A of this task consists of a collaborative group activity where students engage with a case study produced by the IB. Part B of this task consists of an individual analysis.	15

About the IB: For over 50 years, the IB has built a reputation for high-quality, challenging programmes of education that develop internationally minded young people who are well prepared for the challenges of life in the 21st century and are able to contribute to creating a better, more peaceful world.

For further information on the IB Diploma Programme, visit: www.ibo.org/en/dp.

For further information on UWC Atlantic College, visit: www.atlanticcollege.org.

For more on how the DP prepares students for success at university, visit: www.ibo.org/en/university-admission.