

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Subject Brief

Individuals and societies:

World religions – Standard level

First assessments 2013

The IB Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous, academically challenging and balanced programme of education designed to prepare students aged 16 to 19 for success at university and life beyond. The DP aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable, inquiring, caring and compassionate, and to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness and the attitudes necessary to respect and evaluate a range of viewpoints.

To ensure both breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, students must choose at least one subject from five groups: 1) their best language, 2) additional language(s), 3) social sciences, 4) experimental sciences, and 5) mathematics. Students may choose either an arts subject from group 6, or a second subject from groups 1 to 5. At least three and not more than four subjects are taken at higher level (240 recommended teaching hours), while the remaining are taken at standard level (150 recommended teaching hours). In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, action, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.

These IB DP subject briefs illustrate four key course components.

- I. Course description and aims
- II. Curriculum model overview

- III. Assessment model
- IV. Sample questions



I. Course description and aims

The IB DP world religions course is a systematic, analytical yet empathetic study of the variety of beliefs and practices encountered in nine main religions of the world. The course seeks to promote an awareness of religious issues in the contemporary world by requiring the study of a diverse range of religions.

The religions are studied in such a way that students acquire a sense of what it is like to belong to a particular religion and how that influences the way in which the followers of that religion understand the world, act in it, and relate and respond to others.

The aims of the world religions standard level courses are to:

- promote an inquiring, analytical and empathetic approach to the study of religion
- develop an informed understanding of the diversity of world religions
- foster a respectful awareness of the significance of the beliefs and practices for the faith member
- develop an understanding of how religion affects people's lives
- encourage a global appreciation of the issues surrounding religious and spiritual beliefs, controversies and movements in the world today
- promote responsible and informed international citizenship.

II. Curriculum model overview

Component	Recommended teaching hours
<p>Part 1: Introduction to world religions</p> <p>Five world religions will be studied from a choice of nine, at least one to be chosen from each of the following three categories</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism • Judaism, Christianity, Islam • Taoism, Jainism, Baha'i Faith <p>The following three questions underpin the study of all world religions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the human condition? • Where are we going? • How do we get there 	50
<p>Part 2: In-depth studies</p> <p>Two world religions to be studied from a choice of six, one to be chosen from each category</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hinduism, Buddhism, Sikhism • Judaism, Christianity, Islam <p>The study of each religion will be guided through the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rituals • Sacred texts • Doctrines/beliefs • Religious experience • Ethics and moral conduct 	80
<p>Part 3: Internal assessment</p> <p>Investigative study</p>	20

III. Assessment model

Having followed the Diploma Programme world religions at standard level, students will be expected to do the following.

Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of specified content

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of five world religions chosen for the introductory unit
- Define, understand and use concepts associated with particular world religions
- Demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of two religions reflecting different traditions
- In internal assessment, demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a specific world religions investigative study

Demonstrate application and analysis of knowledge and understanding

- Demonstrate how the key concepts of a religion are expressed in the behaviour of believers
- Demonstrate application and analysis of concepts
- Research, select and analyse material from both primary and secondary sources

Demonstrate synthesis and evaluation

- Evaluate concepts associated with world religions
- Synthesize by integrating evidence and critical commentary
- Select, use and apply a variety of appropriate skills and techniques
- Select, use and apply the prescribed world religions skills in appropriate contexts
- Demonstrate the ability to organize ideas into a clear, logical, coherent and balanced account
- Evaluate the reliability of evidence and the chosen method of research for the internal assessment

Assessment at a glance

Type of assessment	Format of assessment	Time (hours)	Weighting of final grade (%)
External			75
Paper 1	Five (of nine possible) stimulus response questions, covering at least three religions	1.25	30
Paper 2	Two (of fourteen possible) essay questions based on guiding themes	1.5	45
Internal			25
Written analysis	Structured format based on an investigative study	20	25

IV. Sample questions

- Explain Taoist ideas about opposites and their reconciliation.
- Define what “haumai” means for Sikhs.
- With reference to both creed and scripture, evaluate two different interpretations of the resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- Compare and contrast the bases for the authority of the Qur’an and the Hadiths.

About the IB: For over 40 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 able to contribute to creating a better, more peaceful world.

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To learn more about how the IB Diploma Programme prepares students for success at university, visit: www.ibo.org/recognition or email: recognition@ibo.org