

Setting an IB policy that works for your institution and your students in the United States



International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional

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.

The IB Diploma Programme, for students aged 16 to 19, is an academically challenging and balanced programme of education that prepares students for success at university and life beyond. Students take courses in six different subject groups, maintaining both breadth and depth of study. 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.

As higher education institutions in the United States (US) respond to the growth of the IB, having a clear policy regarding entry requirements for IB Diploma Programme students will help to promote your university and provide clear guidance to IB students interested in applying. The process for creating an IB policy varies by institution, and the IB is eager to assist you in establishing an appropriate policy that will benefit your enrollment and the students interested in attending your institution.

We have prepared this simple guide to help you summarize or improve IB policies at your institution.

IB policies generally have several components:

- an admissions statement that encourages IB students to apply
- details on the admissions requirements regarding subject prerequisites and minimum scores for entry to various courses and language proficiency
- special considerations for IB students, including scholarships or other opportunities
- awarding credit and advanced placement
- additional information relevant to the student's application for admission.

The following table describes these components in detail and provides some suggested wording for your policy.

Policy components

Suggested wording

I. Admissions statement

IB students need to know that your institution and its faculty understand what the IB qualifications means and that you seek and value what these students can bring to your campus. A statement on your admissions website is a good place to start.

[Your university] values the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme and its engaging and challenging curriculum that encourages critical thinking, intercultural understanding and respect. We welcome applications from IB students.

II. Admissions requirements

Alternative pathways

For IB students who do not achieve the required IB diploma scores or do not receive the full diploma, your institution may be able to offer an alternative pathway by allowing them to apply using their scores on the individual assessments or by presenting their IB assessments in combination with additional qualifications.

All IB diploma students are encouraged to apply to [your university]. The IB diploma or certificates in individual IB subjects will be used for admissions decisions.

English proficiency

One of the distinctive components of the IB curriculum is the requirement for students to learn two languages. IB students who have studied outside of the United States and may be non-native English speakers can demonstrate a high degree of proficiency, evidenced by their score on the higher level or standard level IB English language examinations.

English is the official language of instruction at [your university]. All prospective students must demonstrate English language competency prior to admission.

IB applicants to [your university] must satisfy this requirement by attaining a minimum score of [insert IB grade] in the Diploma Programme higher level or a minimum score of [insert IB grade] in the standard level English language examinations.

There is no need for students who have taken these IB Diploma Programme English courses to take other qualifications such as IELTS or TOEFL.

III. Special considerations

Scholarships

Higher education institutions in the US and around the world award scholarships to outstanding students who show achievement in a variety of ways. Universities and colleges that grant scholarships to IB students have added a powerful incentive to attract and recruit high-calibre students who are ready for the challenges of university coursework and the transition to campus life.

[Your university] offers a variety of scholarships to both local and international IB students. For more information please visit the [your university] website.

IV. Awarding credit and advanced placement

Credit

US colleges and universities recognize that IB students have excelled academically and grant credit for the IB diploma or for individual IB subject examinations.

[Your university] recognizes IB achievement by awarding credits that may be counted towards the number of courses required for graduation and may be used to help fulfill distribution requirements. [Your university] awards up to [number of credits or hours] for the IB diploma. For students completing IB certificates, credit may be awarded for scores of [minimum score] or above on standard level or higher level examinations.

For more information please visit the [your university] website.

Standard level and higher level subjects

Based on research on the IB curriculum and the requirements in the individual subjects, higher education institutions are able to make decisions about the university course requirements that have been met in the IB Diploma Programme and the individual standard level and higher level courses that align with university courses at your institution.

[Your university] recognizes the IB standard level and higher level examinations, when awarding credit, course exemptions and placement.

For students completing individual certificates in the Diploma Programme, credit may be awarded, based on the grades in the individual subject examinations.

If you would like information regarding credit eligibility for an IB examination in a subject area not listed, please contact the department to which you are applying.

Core requirements

In addition to study in six subject areas, the IB Diploma Programme includes an extended essay of 4,000 words; experiential learning through creativity, action, service (CAS); and theory of knowledge (TOK).

US colleges and universities value the core components of the Diploma Programme and may award additional elective credit.

Students who receive the full IB diploma are also eligible for [insert number] additional elective credits for completing the core requirements of the IB Diploma Programme: creativity, action, service (CAS), the extended essay (EE) and theory of knowledge (TOK).

Advanced standing

Many US colleges and universities recognize that students who have obtained an IB diploma and performed well on the IB assessments have demonstrated a mastery of first-year curriculum. To avoid having students repeating course content, many institutions grant advanced standing.

Students with the IB diploma and a score of [IB score] or higher will be granted sophomore standing.

V. Additional information

Requests for transcripts of results

The official International Baccalaureate transcript is required in order to award credit.

Contact information

For any additional questions or comments, please contact:

*Contact Name
Office of Admissions
Your university
Phone
Email*

Learn more about the IB policy that is right for your institution by going online to www.ibo.org/recognition or e-mail us at recognition@ibo.org