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Introducing the IB Diploma Programme

Marc Abrioux
Jill Rutherford

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Our IB Diploma resources aim to:

- encourage learners to explore concepts, ideas and topics that have local and global significance
- help students develop a positive attitude to learning in preparation for higher education
- assist students in approaching complex questions, applying critical-thinking skills and forming reasoned answers.



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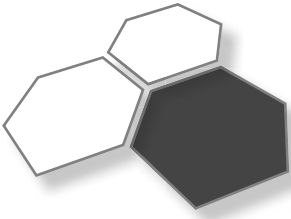
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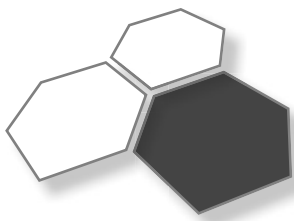


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Foreword

Monique Seefried

Monique Seefried is president of the Croix Rouge Farm Memorial Foundation, serves on the board of CASIE and UWC-USA, on the Headmaster's Advisory Council of Toronto French School and is a trustee *emerita* of Atlanta International School. She was chair of the IB Board of Governors 2003–9.

Educators and interested readers will find in *Introducing the IB Diploma Programme* unbiased views about the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) from all over the IB world, positive as well as critical but all of them constructive. It is a wonderful introduction to the IB for new schools and new teachers that are being welcomed into the organization. The goal of this manual is first to introduce the IB, where it came from and what it stands for. It is also meant to enable practitioners through the many examples it offers to better implement the IB programmes in their schools. Most importantly, it is offering advice and examples on how to develop, to grow the IB programmes to better fit the world we live in, a world that the founders of the IB could not have imagined.

The IB founders knew that wars and mass migrations would challenge world peace and that international mindedness and cosmopolitanism were key to avoiding new conflicts. They could not have imagined the internet and the new interconnected world it created, a world that requires developing and practising a world-mindedness and global citizenship unknown until now and essential for the future of our planet.

The visionary thinkers who created the DP had experienced two World Wars and their atrocities, as well as conservative education systems bent on perpetuating division and suffering. This book makes clear that, in their own broad vision of education, they never wanted the DP to remain static. With the development of neuroscience and the appearance of digital media, they would have expected new generations of educators to continuously reassess the content of their teaching and its usefulness to the present and the future.

From its inception, the organization understood the importance for education to come out of the kind of mould that had failed previous generations. Therefore when it began, the DP re-examined all it taught and created a culture of critical thinking that has pervaded its pedagogy since then. All IB courses, as well as the extended essay (EE) and the theory of knowledge (TOK) course, embrace learning by questioning and fostering a culture of critical thinking. Curriculum review cycles, collaboration with universities and innovative approaches to professional development (pd) are ways for the organization to continuously question and review itself at the academic level.

In recent years, the organization has also taken a critical look at how it was serving schools and, as a result, has undergone a major reorganization. This has led to three IB global centres, an increased collaboration between academic and school divisions as well as an ability to respond in a timely fashion to school demands across the world. Furthermore, it is anticipated that it will diversify recruitment and that a diversity of languages and approaches to learning will reinforce the IB's international mindedness.

Chapters on curriculum, assessment and pd will be an essential tool for those seasoned IB educators eager to increase and refresh their knowledge of the IB. They will be absolutely essential for new IB teachers and administrators who need to discover how to implement the IB, understand its philosophy and become active participants in the growth of the IB. All need to realise that, while the IB is growing at a rapid pace, their involvement is key to the life and blood of the IB, not only in teaching its programmes, but also in continuously shaping them and questioning them.

The deep insights case studies introduce on different IB experiences reveal attitudes and values that are at the core of what an IB education stands for, an education that makes all recipients become part of a vast family,



a movement, loose and tight at the same time, where everyone can find his or her place under one condition: respect for others.

This should reinforce the essential understanding that by belonging to or joining the IB family one becomes part of a large family committed to diversity. In so doing, one embraces a community steeped in a global and pluralistic humanism whose cosmopolitan ethics can be shared by people the world over and most importantly a community committed to the promotion of peace and understanding.

IB aspirations, 50 years ago, were to help young people develop into world citizens able to relate and communicate with each other. They were to share a common culture and be able to respect their planet and each other. Today, with the internet and all new technologies of the 21st century, such attributes have become a must. To serve their students, IB teachers should therefore take advantage of this vast IB family to learn from other cultures and look beyond their communities, their schools and their classrooms. With the development of the IB virtual community, all IB students should be able to work collaboratively with students from other cultures and other socio-economic backgrounds and learn to become world citizens. IB teachers should realise that their teaching goes way beyond their traditional classroom walls.

The virtual community should also continue to reinforce the pioneering commitment of IB to experiential learning, an intrinsic part of the DP creativity action service (CAS) requirements since its inception. The service part of CAS is, in my eyes, the most important part of an IB education. As the British historian Arnold Toynbee pointed out, now that the world is united by technology, we have to unite it at the emotional level. And this is where the role of community service is so important in an IB education. It allows the development of a global sense of social responsibility and teaches that in today's world, little can be done individually but big differences can be made collectively.

Many schools have joined the IB for its challenging programmes and curriculum, for its rigorous assessment and standards recognised internationally. This is not enough to be or to become an IB school. Schools are expected to demonstrate what they have done to fulfil the mission of the organization. Schools are challenged to inculcate in their students the respect for differences and the desire to learn and work towards a better and more peaceful world. The IB should in return remain true to its mission by keeping the highest quality of standards while promoting access and including into the IB community a greater balance of schools: geographically, socio-economically, culturally and linguistically. Then, and only then, will the IB have reached the goals it set out to achieve.

Introduction

Marc Abrioux and Jill Rutherford

Marc Abrioux has been closely involved with the DP for more than 30 years, as a teacher, examiner and administrator who has served as the Head of two IB World Schools, including the United World College of the Adriatic. He is currently maintaining his interest in international education as an IB examiner, IB Educator Network (IBEN) consultant and workshop leader, while engaging in other educational management consultancies in Europe and in Asia.

Jill Rutherford has worked with and for the IB in various capacities for over 20 years. She is currently an IBEN consultant, academic director of Ibicus International and a board member of ACS International Schools. Formerly, she was vice-chair of the IB Examining Board and IB Environmental Systems Chief Examiner, IB Diploma teacher in Hong Kong and the UK and founding Director of the IB Diploma at Oakham School, England.

What is the purpose of this book?

This book focuses on the IB Diploma Programme and attempts to collect all aspects of what the reader may want to know about it into one place. While those wishing to find out more about the IB and the DP should visit the IB public website and interested schools should contact their IB regional office, there is a huge amount of information to be absorbed and understood. This book attempts to put the information in a logical order and in a fairly concise way for those wanting to take themselves or their schools into the world of IB. It is intended to support the documents from the IB, not to replace them. But it does provide a forum for voices of many IB and DP specialists and experts who wish to share their enthusiasm with the reader.

Who is this book for?

This book is intended primarily for school administrators and teachers seeking to find out more about the IB and the DP, although parents, students and educators may also find it of interest. Specifically, it may be useful for:

- senior administrators and leaders of a prospective or newly authorised national or international school
- leaders and newly appointed leaders of a DP school who want to take it to the next stage
- teachers who are joining a DP school or who wish to join one and want to know more about the IB philosophy and pedagogy relating to their subject in the DP
- DP teachers who are exploring ways in which to extend their professional interest in the IB
- any person who is considering joining a national or international school which is researching the DP or which has adopted it, or who is simply interested in finding out more about the DP's international education in practice.

How to use this book

This book is in five Parts and is designed for readers to dip into the sections which are of most interest to them.

- **Part I:** takes the basic questions about the IB and provides some answers. **What is the IB? Why does it exist and what is its philosophy? What are the programmes it offers and why is international mindedness important for education?** It provides an overview of the beginning, growth and future plans of the IB and considers the IB community from many angles. It then provides an overview of the three IB



regions around the world and some case studies of the IB in some of over 140 countries where IB World Schools exist.

- **Part 2:** focuses on how to apply to become an IB World School and provides details of the expectations that the IB has of its schools and of the journey a school takes to become authorized. It also covers the **what** and **how** of the application process in some detail.
- **Part 3:** looks at the DP in detail. It starts by considering the **what, why and how of the DP** and then covers the hexagon, the core and all DP subjects – including those which have been added or modified recently. It also looks in more depth at the reasons behind the structure of the DP, its assessment and development. Also in Part 3 are chapters on the DP examining board and academic honesty. Each subject is presented by an expert in its teaching who gives a personal view of the course content and assessment and some tips and resources to consider. This Part should be of particular interest to those about to become DP subject teachers, and to schools considering or reconsidering which subjects they wish to offer for their students.
- **Part 4:** considers recognition of the DP by several stakeholders, universities, employers, teachers and students, with the longest chapter being on university recognition. It also includes voices from employers, teachers and students about the DP itself. This Part should be of particular interest to those in schools which are joining or have recently joined the IB.
- **Part 5:** moves on to **what next?** It looks at how the DP can develop in a school in order to present students with opportunities they might otherwise have ignored. Another section addresses how a teacher can develop within the IB. Also there are some case studies on pitfalls to avoid and tips on how to strengthen the DP in a school as well as some advice on the new five-year evaluation process for all schools.

Armed with an overview of the book contents, a reader may dip into the sections that are most relevant and use it as a reference material rather than read it sequentially. But we do encourage you to explore and consider the IB philosophy and international mindedness as well as the practical details because it is its mission that drives and forms all of the IB pedagogy.

Many resources and references are cited and suggested in the book. All websites and webpages referenced in this book were active on 1 June 2012. Some are IB official documents which are all available in the IB store via the IB website. Others are resources on the IB and international education from other publishers and authors. The suggested further resources from DP subject contributors are not necessarily endorsed by the contributor or the IB but do provide a starting point for appreciating what is currently available. Every effort has been made to ensure that the information presented within this book is accurate. All figures quoted are correct as of the time of writing.

With thanks

The book would not have been possible without the dozens of contributors who have willingly given their expertise, time and wisdom in writing various sections. We thank all contributors most sincerely. Each contributor's name and brief biography appears before the text which they have contributed. In instances where a contributor wrote more than one piece, their name only appears before subsequent contributions. All the rest of the text is written by Marc Abrioux or Jill Rutherford. The editors also thank Jack Rutherford (who asserts his intellectual property rights) for the cartoon ideas throughout the book.

We are all different and all have different experiences of the IB and this is reflected in the different 'tones' or 'voices' in successive Parts of the work, and this is only to be expected from as diverse an educational community of experts. In Part 3, each subject expert has contributed a piece on how they view their subject. We have not replicated IB documentation that the reader can find elsewhere but have built on this, given personal views of the subjects and provided an overview and ideas to take further. For the IB has been largely created by, and

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for, educators who are committed to seeking what is best for their students and for others through increased knowledge, skills and an opening up to ‘the other’.

Between us, we have hundreds of years of IB experience, throughout each of the three IB regions of the world, as teachers, heads, administrators, examiners, parents and, last but not least, students of the DP. The IB is a collegiate community in so many senses and the DP could not be what it is today without the energy and commitment of so many to its philosophy and implementation. It is the mission of the IB that holds us all together in a world that remains marked by diversity, working for something greater than ourselves and that is a force for making the world a better place for the next generations. Being a small part of that challenge is humbling and gratifying, and the editors wish to thank all the ‘IB people’ over the years from which we have learned so much.

