

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Frequently Asked Questions at AIS

Are you currently an authorized IB DP school?

No, we are currently an IB DP Candidate school, working towards full DP authorization. We are planning a DP Verification visit in the next month or so, and that team will review our documentation and preparedness and determine whether or not we officially can offer the programme in August. We are both prepared and optimistic from all of the feedback we have been given and all of the collaborative work we've accomplished.

How does the MYP prepare students for the DP?

The MYP Programme at AIS specifically equips students with learning skills, attitudes, and perspectives to handle global and personal complexity. Self-management skills, creative and critical thinking, and the disposition to inquire, and research to conclusion are key aims of the MYP Programme. All of these work together to prepare students for their DP academics, which is both academically rigorous, requiring student-led research and inquiry, as well as the DP Core, demanding of them responsible action and disciplined, flexible thinking.

Are you (AIS) doing Cambridge A Levels instead of the IB DP?

No, we are offering both programmes concurrently. Both programmes are options for students finishing the MYP after Year 11.

Should I take Cambridge A Levels or IB DP?

This is a question that the school cannot answer. Both programmes are valuable and meaningful and both offer opportunities and scholarships to universities around the world. While the full DP requires a total of six examined subjects, along with the DP Core elements, TOK, CAS, and EE, the A Levels only expects students to take four subjects in the first year and the option to drop one in the second, for a total of three examined subjects. Thus, the full DP requires a high level of rigor and balance, whereas the A Levels allows for particular specialization.

What is Theory of Knowledge (TOK)?

TOK is a non-content course, scheduled on the student's timetables, and revolving around key questions such as "how can I know what I know?" All of the different ways of knowing are examined throughout the course, i.e. reason, emotion, language, perception. These perspectives and questions are trained on the academic disciplines themselves. The TOK is ultimately assessed in a written report and oral presentation.

* Acorns International School (AIS) is a candidate school* for the DP. This school is pursuing authorization as an IB World School. IB World Schools share a common philosophy- a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education- that we believe is important for our students.

Only schools authorized by the IB Organization can offer any of its four academic programmes: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Diploma Programme (DP), or the Career-related Programme (CP). Candidate status gives no guarantee that authorization will be granted.

What is Creativity, Action and Service (CAS)?

CAS ensures that students balance their lives inside and outside of school. It ensures they find purpose and value in intentional action outside of school hours by mandating participation in a number of different activities. Creativity (C in the acronym CAS) is where students explore and extend their creative impulses to the development of some kind of creative project. Action (A in CAS) involves students in physical exertion, ideally leading to the development of a healthy lifestyle. Service (S in CAS) is where students, in collaboration and reciprocation, work to the benefit of a local or global community. CAS aims directly to give students the opportunity to practice the attributes of the IB Learner Profile outside of the school setting.

What is the Extended Essay (EE)?

The Extended Essay is the DP's kind-of-counterpart to the MYP's Personal Project, wherein the students develop a long-term topic of special interest, research it in depth, and put together their findings and conclusions in a report format. The Extended Essay has a requirement of 4,000 words maximum, and usually entails around forty hours of writing and research outside of school.

Are six, examined subjects mandatory for the DP?

The DP has three options: the full Diploma, Trial Diploma, and DP Courses. The full Diploma requires students to take six, examined subjects. The Trial Diploma requires the student to attempt six, examined subjects. The DP Courses path is flexible according to how many DP subjects the student wants, or is able, to register for.

What is the Full Diploma?

The Full Diploma requires students to take six subjects, externally examined at the end of the programme, at the end of the second year, as well as participate and meet the standards and expectations of CAS, EE, and TOK.

What is the Trial Diploma?

The Trial Diploma is for those students that do not quite meet AIS's entry requirements for the full Diploma, but show merit and ability to adapt, grow, and rise to the challenge. Trial Diploma students undergo a series of benchmarks throughout the first six months of Year 12 (DP1) to gauge whether or not they are capable of finishing the Full Diploma successfully. If they do not meet the requirements of these benchmarks, both academic and behavioral, these students will be required to revise their schedule and select the specific DP Courses they will register for instead. These students will revise in accordance to ability, interest, and the input of the student's subject teachers and DP Coordinator.

What are DP Courses?

DP Courses are for students who wish to register for specific subject examinations, rather than do the Full Diploma. Students must still meet the requirements of CAS, while EE and TOK will no longer be mandatory for them. DP Course students will be granted

specific certificates bearing the scores for the registered examinations they took. DP Course students will not be allowed to take more than six subject exams.

Is the DP widely accepted by universities?

The Diploma Programme is widely recognized by world universities for both its' academic rigor, as well as its' emphasis on the holistic development of the student as a learner and active and responsible participant in the contemporary world. We have posted the IB published University Recognition Index on our website and would encourage you to go do your own research, both within that document, and also on your own, to conclude for yourself the widespread recognition for the DP.

We will always recommend that you look into the specific entry requirements for the specific university you are interested in applying to.