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1. What are the requirements for the full Diploma?

- Six subjects
- Theory of Knowledge(TOK)
- Creativity, Action, Service(CAS)
- Extended Essay

The full diploma consists of six subjects, usually three at higher level and three at standard level. One subject must be taken from each group below:

Group One: Language A

This is the student's native language or the language of the school. At Saint George's, English and Chinese are offered.

Group Two: A second language

Language A Self-taught (for students whose mother-tongue is not English)

Language B (a second language that has been studied for several years)

Language *ab initio* (a second language that is newly begun as part of the IB program)

Group Three: Individuals and Societies

Group Four: The Sciences

Group Five: Mathematics

Group Six: The Arts or a second option from Group 1-5

In addition to the six subjects, TOK, CAS, and an Extended Essay must be completed.
(See question 5, 6, and 7)

2. What is a certificate candidate?

A certificate can be earned in a single subject by meeting all assessment criteria to a satisfactory level. Certificate students take IB exams but are not enrolled in all the necessary subjects for a full diploma.

3. How should I decide whether to take the full diploma or the IB certificates? What benefits come from taking IB courses, but not the diploma?

This is a complex issue and one that should be considered carefully with guidance from parents, teachers, and counselors. If the IB Diploma is needed in order to meet requirements at the universities of choice, the decision is simple. Enroll as a full Diploma student.

For most students there is choice involved. The full Diploma is seen as a well-rounded, rigorous, and comprehensive course of study for the final two years at Saint George's School. When applying to universities, the diploma can certainly be an advantage. Being part of the diploma program is one very tangible way of showing yourself to be a highly motivated and inquisitive student. Furthermore, students in the diploma program receive extra training in skills that are important for college success, such as writing the extended essay and the approach to knowledge provided by TOK. IB Diploma students should feel confident that they have been given the preparation needed for success at even the most highly competitive universities. The diploma does not, however, guarantee admission. Many other factors are involved in how colleges make decisions.

However, some students choose certificates (taking only some IB exams, but not the full program). Certificates are issued for completion of individual IB courses and will designate a score of 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest). Scores of 5 and above, particularly in HL courses, may receive advanced credit at North American universities. A very limited number of colleges in the Americas grant credit for IB SL courses. Also, a transcript showing some IB courses is stronger than one showing none. Colleges and universities look for students willing to take challenges.

4. Are there online Diploma Program courses?

Yes, an online option is available through Pamoja for an additional expense.
<http://pje.geniussis.com/PublicWelcome.aspx>

5. Do I need the IB diploma to get into a prestigious university?

The only honest answer is that it depends on the university. A simple answer is "NO"; an IB Diploma is not a requirement in many parts of the world. There are some places though, particularly in Europe, where an IB Diploma is either necessary or a particular advantage. Saint George's has had non-Diploma students who have been accepted to highly prestigious universities. They have shown their intellectual abilities and their willingness to embrace challenge in other ways. Universities want to know that students have attempted the most rigorous program available to them. At Saint George's, that is the full IB Diploma Program.

The IB Diploma is awarded after in July, after your senior year. A college in the United States will not revoke your admission based on your IB Score. Colleges in the United States accept you based on you being an "IB Diploma Candidate".

6. What are the requirements for TOK?

The Theory of Knowledge course is an interdisciplinary requirement intended to stimulate critical reflection on the knowledge and experience gained inside and outside the classroom. The course challenges students to question the base of knowledge, to be aware of subject and ideological biases, and to develop the ability to analyze evidence that is expressed in rational argument. It is a key element in encouraging appreciation of other cultural perspectives.

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) recommends approximately 100 hours of TOK instruction. The official IB assessment consists of an externally assessed essay and an internally assessed presentation.

7. What are the requirements for CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service)?

The IBO's goal is to educate the whole person and to foster responsible, compassionate citizens. The CAS program encourages participation in activities and encourages sharing with the local community. The basic CAS requirement is approximately 150 hours that balances participation in the three areas. Students are required to be self-reflective about their learning in CAS activities and to document their planning participation and reflection.

8. What is the Extended Essay?

The extended essay is the requirement that most fully acquaints students with the type of independent research and writing skills expected in university. The student chooses a topic of interest, usually in one of the student's IB subjects, and produces the essay with guidance from a faculty supervisor. The IBO recommends that the essay take a total of 40 hours of private study and writing. The maximum word limit is 4,000; there is no minimum. Essays of fewer than 3,000 words, however, would not be seen as having significant depth on the chosen topic. Extended essay due dates are set by the EE Advisor, Sara Smith.

9. What do universities think about the IB? (from: www.ibo.org)

It is safe to say that universities around the world recognize the IB as a rigorous and well-balanced program that prepares students well for university study. This does not mean that they all recognize an IB Diploma in the same way. Some universities require an IB diploma or equivalent national qualification for admission. Other universities around the world do not require the IB Diploma, but they do value it. Here are a few statements made by U.S. universities on this subject:

"The educational sophistication that students develop through an experience in an IB program will serve them well at institutions that attract serious students."

-University of Southern California

"Princeton University recognizes the IB and uses examination results for advanced placement purpose."

-Princeton University

"One of the advantages of an IB curriculum is its structure and quality. It is a coordinated program, well-established, well-known and well-respected. We know the quality of IB courses, and we think the IB curriculum is terrific."

-Christoph Guttentag, Director of Undergraduate Admission, Duke

"IB is well known to us for excellent preparation. Success in an IB programme correlates well with success at Harvard. We are always pleased to see the credentials of the IB Diploma Programme on the transcript."

-Marilyn McGraff Lewis, Director of Admissions, Harvard University

"The rigor of IB Diploma requirements meets our recommendation for the strongest high school preparation possible...In sum; the IB diploma candidate who has met the challenge successfully receives strong consideration from the William & Mary admission record."

-Allison Jesse, former Associate Dean of Admission, College of William & Mary

"The Board of Admission recognizes that the IB is a challenging program of study, and takes that into account when evaluating an applicant's record."

-Wellesley College

10. Are there extra costs associated with taking IB exams at SGS?

The school covers the registration fee for IB exams and the exam fees for each external IB exam in the spring of the student's Senior year. The IB exam is considered their final exam. Skipping an IB exam in May may result in charging the student for the registration cost for the exam that the school covered. Also note, if a student skips the IB exam, which is considered their final exam in a class, then the teacher may implement certain academic penalties at their discretion. This will be conveyed to the IB students at the start of their Junior year.

11. How are IB courses assessed?

Internally, courses are graded according to the usual A-F scale. Externally, both Higher (HL) and Standard Levels (SL), each examined subject is graded on a scale of 1 (minimum) to 7 (maximum). The award of a Diploma requires a minimum of 24 points* with satisfactory completion of the Theory of Knowledge course, the Extended Essay and CAS.

*Note: There are a number of failing conditions that can negate a diploma even if 24 points have been earned, such as a 2 in a HL subject. See the IB Diploma Coordinator if you would like to see the complete list.

The IB program provides a liberal education that emphasizes a philosophy of learning. Consequently, a range of assessment procedures is used in which external examinations are complemented by internal assessment.

External Assessment: These components are sent to over 4,000 examiners around the world. The examiners then send their results to the IB assessment center.

- Written examinations
- Essays, research notebooks
- The Extended Essay

Internal Assessment: These assessments are marked by the teacher and are subject to external moderation. Samples are sent to moderators to ensure that the teacher's standards are correct.

- A variety of types (oral, written, field work, laboratory experiments)

12. What do students say about the IB Diploma Program? (from: www.ibo.org)

IB Diploma students speak of the challenges the program presents:

“The IB Diploma is not for the undedicated student, but it will make you a better student.”

“The biggest challenge is the workload and time management.”

“I don't think it would be possible to complete the IB program without becoming a more hard- working, intuitive, and organized student.”

“The IB Program “has forced me to learn to use my time efficiently. Either that, or learn how to live without sleep.”

Students also speak with pride about their achievements:

“It is important to challenge oneself in the pursuit of knowledge. I look back on the work I have done and how I have grown and changed through my new knowledge and I feel a sense of pride.”

“Taking IB classes is, in many ways, more fun than taking normal classes because I have to work harder to get a decent mark. While this may sound strange, it is, in fact, more satisfying to get a good grade in a class I've worked hard for than to sit back and be completely bored.”

And, the students note other aspects of the program they value:

“I like the fact that it encourages me to be well-rounded in both academics and activities.”

“The best thing about the IB diploma programs is its ability to transcend borders; it is worldwide. I received help from a friend in France on my math homework.”