

# Glossary of International Baccalaureate (IB) Terminology

## ***ab initio* language**

This is an IB language taught "from scratch". At ISK this exam is offered in French, Spanish or Swahili. The *ab initio* language exam must be taken at the end of grade 12 as a standard level after two years of study.

## **Assessment**

Students taking IB courses at ISK receive two grades, one from the class teacher and one from the IB Organization (IBO) after exams are written. The IB grades are on a 1 to 7 scale, where 1 is the lowest grade and 7 is the highest. An IB diploma candidate takes six examinations. The maximum score possible for the diploma is 45, representing 7 on each of six required courses plus 3 possible bonus points for outstanding work in the Theory of Knowledge and the Extended Essay components. The minimum score to pass is 24 points; additional requirements include 12 points on the three higher level courses and 9 points on the three standard level courses. The average IB diploma candidate around the world earns a total of about 30 points. Some universities have a minimum requirement of 30 or more points; others accept a diploma regardless of the point-total achieved. Contact universities of interest to you to find out their requirements.

## **Bilingual Diploma**

A student at ISK may achieve a "Bilingual IB Diploma" by completing two languages selected from group 1.

## **CAS activities**

This acronym stands for Creativity, Activity and Service. Diploma candidates may complete their CAS requirement by doing a combination of activities in arts, athletics, and community-service projects. Activities are designed to meet seven learning outcomes that contribute to the education of the whole child. Students log and reflect on their activities electronically. A CAS Coordinator monitors their progress. Without completion of the CAS requirements, a student is unable to receive the IB diploma.

## **Course candidate**

An IB course candidate is a student who successfully completes an IB course but does not do so as part of an IB diploma.

## **Extended essay**

A required project for the diploma candidate, the extended essay is a substantial independent project. Usually about 4,000 words, the essay topic is chosen from within one of the subject areas, and reflects a combination of research skills and thoughtful analysis. The essay is planned with the IB Coordinator and IB subject teachers early in the second semester of the junior year. Once a subject area is chosen and an IB teacher agrees to guide the candidate, the students are expected to have a rough draft completed by the middle of April of their junior year (grade 11). There is a timeline for the process of producing extended essays that is to be followed by IB students.

## **Diploma candidate**

An IB candidate is a student who successfully completes six examinations in five or six subject areas as part of a two-year cycle in the 11th and 12th grades. A diploma student must also complete an extended essay, Theory of Knowledge course, and CAS program.

## **Higher level**

For many students, once individual subjects have been chosen, the greatest difficulty is in deciding whether to study a subject at the standard or higher level. In making these decisions, students need to carefully balance their interests and abilities with the university entrance requirements. In all departments, there are experienced IB teachers who can counsel students on the expectations at SL and HL, and the relative difficulty at each level. In some subjects, HL and SL vary substantially in degree of difficulty and type of material covered; in

other subjects, the levels differ primarily in the amount of work required rather than degree of difficulty. A higher level course is always completed over two years. Higher levels can lead to advanced placement and credit at many U.S. and Canadian colleges and universities. Three/four higher level courses must be completed for the diploma program.

### **Internal assessment**

The IB requests that class teachers submit an assessment of the student's work in an IB class. This internal marking tends to involve as much as 30 per cent of the total mark. In this way, the IB has avoided the problem of placing total emphasis on one examination at the end of the course, and to recognize ongoing assessments.

### **External languages**

The IB recognizes that many students speak more than one language fluently, and that these languages may not be taught at the school. Arrangements can be made at ISK to have an IB examination in any of more than twenty languages. Normally these outside language courses are taught by a private tutor, arranged and paid for by the student's parents. The IB Coordinator may be able to provide information and assistance to such tutors.

### **Registration**

Registration refers to the process of registering students as official examination candidates with the IB. The IB coordinator submits all registration requests on behalf of families and handles all registration matters. Once a student is registered via the IB's electronic registration site, families confirm that the registration is correct and arrange payment. Families at ISK are responsible for all IB examination and related fees.

### **Results**

The IB examinations, taken in May, have results reported in July. Results are issued via the IBO web site (see [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)) and PIN-access numbers are issued to individual students. A free service is provided whereby results are sent to selected universities if the appropriate form is filled in by the student and given to the IB Coordinator prior to a deadline. The actual diploma and printed course results are sent to schools for forwarding to students in late August or early September. It is the student's responsibility to leave a forwarding address to which these original documents can be sent.

### **Standard level**

An IB course that is less intense than the higher level, allowing students to develop knowledge and skills in subjects they may not choose as a major in college, but which expose them to a broad-based curriculum. University advanced placement is not usually given for such a course. Two/three SL courses must be completed for the diploma program. At ISK all SL courses are taken over two years.

### **Subject group**

The IB philosophy requires that diploma candidates study in five or six subject areas, referred to as "groups"

**Group 1:** Studies in Language and Literature

**Group 2:** Language Acquisition

**Group 3:** Individuals and Societies

**Group 4:** Sciences

**Group 5:** Mathematics

**Group 6:** The Arts, or an additional course from groups 1, 2, 3, or 4.

### **Theory of Knowledge (TOK)**

TOK is a course taken by all diploma candidates over three semesters. The teacher interweaves all the IB subject areas so that the commonalities and differences in man's various fields of knowledge are explored. This class does not have a formal IB examination, but the teacher does evaluate the diploma candidate's performance for the IB Organization, and one class essay is evaluated by IB examiners and included in the awarding of bonus points when assessed along with the extended essay. A maximum of 3 bonus points may be awarded for very good essays produced in both TOK and the "extended essay" components.