The International Baccalaureate

Diploma Programme grade descriptors

The IB Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous, academically challenging and balanced two-year programme of education designed to prepare students aged 16 to 19 for success at university and in life beyond. The DP provides opportunities to develop both disciplinary and interdisciplinary understanding that meets rigorous standards. It encourages students to be knowledgeable, inquiring, caring and compassionate, and to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness and the attitudes necessary to respect and evaluate a range of viewpoints.

The DP uses both internally and externally assessed components to assess student performance. Externally marked summative assessments at the end of the course typically make up around 80% of the student's final course grade, although internally marked formative and summative assessments can account for as much as 50% of the grade for some courses. The marks awarded for each course range from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest), and are awarded based on the extent to which students master basic and advanced academic skills, such as:

- knowledge and understanding of content and concepts
- critical thinking, reflective, research and independent learning skills
- application of standard methods
- analysing and presenting information
- evaluating and constructing arguments
- creative problem-solving
- intercultural understanding and international outlook.

The following grade descriptors are a compilation of the characteristics of performance at each grade for DP courses in general, and are intended to help explain the academic achievement required to achieve a particular grade. Examiners use the individual subject group descriptors when determining grade boundaries for examination papers and coursework components, and when marking student work. More detailed subject group grade descriptors can be found at: **http://bit.ly/1BtjkJb**

Any descriptor of student achievement should be considered in conjunction with relevant information related to the curriculum and assessment components of a given course. Further information about DP courses can be found at: **http://www.ibo.org/en/programmes/diploma-programme/**

The descriptors

7 The student demonstrates excellent content knowledge and understanding, conceptual and contextual awareness and critical, reflective thinking. Highly effective research, investigation and technical skills are evident, as is the ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesize qualitative and quantitative evidence, knowledge and concepts to reach valid conclusions or solve problems. In collaborative exercises, the student works very well with others, ethically and responsibly, and with perseverance. Responses are highly insightful, accurate, clear, concise, convincing, logically structured, with sufficient detail, precise use of appropriate terminology and with appropriate attention to purpose and audience. Responses are creative, make very effective use of well-selected examples, demonstrate awareness of alternative points of view and provide clear evidence of intercultural understanding.

6 The student demonstrates very good content knowledge and understanding, conceptual and contextual awareness and critical, reflective thinking. Competent research, investigation and technical skills are evident, as is the ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesize evidence, knowledge and concepts. In collaborative exercises, the student works well with others, ethically and responsibly, and with perseverance. Responses are mainly accurate, clear, concise, convincing, logically structured, with sufficient detail, using consistent terminology and with appropriate attention to purpose and audience. Responses show creativity, make effective use of examples, demonstrate awareness of alternative points of view and provide evidence of intercultural understanding.

5 The student demonstrates sound content knowledge and understanding, good conceptual and contextual awareness and evidence of critical, reflective thinking. Research, investigation and technical skills are evident and sometimes well developed. Analytical ability is evident, although responses may at times be more descriptive than evaluative. In collaborative investigations, the student generally works well with others, ethically and responsibly, and with perseverance. Responses are generally accurate, clear, logically structured and coherent, with mainly relevant material, using suitable terminology, and are sometimes well developed. Responses show reasonable creativity, use of examples, awareness of audience and evidence of intercultural understanding.

4 The student demonstrates, with some gaps, secure content knowledge and understanding, some conceptual and contextual awareness and some evidence of critical thinking. Research, investigation and technical skills are evident, but not thoroughly developed. Analysis is generally valid, but more descriptive than evaluative. The student solves basic or routine problems, but with limited ability to deal with new or difficult situations. In collaborative exercises, the student works within a team and generally approaches investigations ethically and responsibly, but requires supervision. Responses are mostly accurate and clear with little irrelevant material. There is some ability to logically structure responses with adequate coherence and use of appropriate terminology. Responses sometimes show creativity, and include some awareness of audience and evidence of intercultural understanding.

3 The student demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the content, with limited evidence of conceptual and contextual awareness. Research and/or investigation is evident, but remains undeveloped. There is some ability to comprehend and solve problems. Collaborative investigations are approached ethically and responsibly, but require close supervision. Responses are only sometimes valid and appropriately detailed. There is some expression of ideas and organization of work and basic use of appropriate terminology, but arguments are rarely convincing. Responses lack clarity and some material is repeated or irrelevant. There is limited creativity, awareness of context or audience and limited evidence of intercultural understanding.

2 The student demonstrates little knowledge or understanding of the content, with weak comprehension of concepts and context and little evidence of application. Evidence of research and/or investigation is only superficial. There is little ability to comprehend and solve problems. Responses are rarely accurate or valid. There is some attempt to express ideas, use terminology appropriate to the subject and organize work, but the response is rarely convincing. There is very little creativity, awareness of context or audience and little evidence of intercultural understanding.

1 The student demonstrates very rudimentary knowledge or understanding of the content, with very weak comprehension of concepts and context. Ability to comprehend and solve problems or to express ideas is not evident. Responses are rarely accurate or valid. Organization is lacking to the point that responses are confusing. Responses demonstrate very little to no appreciation of context or audience, inappropriate or inadequate use of terminology, and little to no intercultural understanding.