

narrabundah college
canberra



International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Guide

Information for parents and students
completing the Diploma in November 2025

Quick Facts

- Students complete both an ATAR diploma and an International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma.
- In the IB, students complete 3 higher level and 3 standard level subjects and the Core comprising of the Extended essay, CAS (Creative, Activity and Service) and Theory of Knowledge.
- Classes are ATAR/IB combined and the ATAR assessment tasks are related to the IB content.
- Students also complete IB internal assessments and IB exams.
- Students attend tutorials in and outside class time in Year 12 session 2 and 3 to cover IB content and prepare for their IB exams.
- Students cannot exit the IB programme until they have completed session 1 in Year 11.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate Organization aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the IBO works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment. These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

Useful web addresses

The IBO public web page can be found at www.ibo.org.

The Association of Australasian IB Schools web page can be found at www.aaibs.org.

Contents

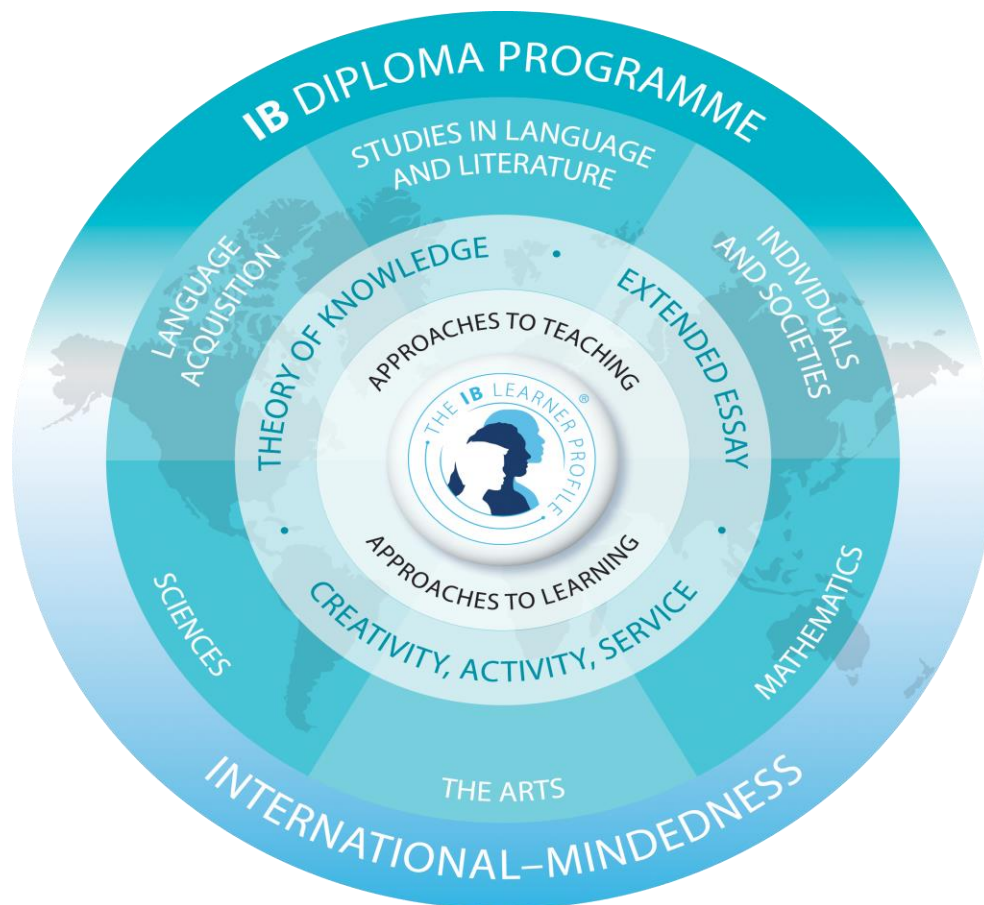
1.	The IB Diploma: content, structure and requirements	4
2.	IB Learner Profiles	7
3.	Academic Honesty	8
4.	Language Study in the IB Diploma	9
5.	Aims of Subject by Group	10
	Theory of Knowledge	
	Extended Essay	
	Creativity, Activity and Service	
	Group 1 Language A1	
	Group 2 Language B	
	Group 3 Individuals and Societies	
	Group 4 Experimental Sciences	
	Group 5 Mathematics	
	Group 6 The Arts	
6.	Assessment Structure	17
7.	Subject Choice at Narrabundah College	19
8.	Frequently Asked Questions	20

THE IB DIPLOMA: content, structure and requirements

The Diploma is a course taught continuously over two years in Years 11 and 12. It provides a liberal educational experience across six academic subjects allowing for focus to occur in the three Higher Level subjects and breadth to occur in the three Standard Level subjects. It encourages:

- a rigorous academic approach to the taught courses
- a critical thinking course (*Theory of Knowledge*)
- the opportunity to develop individual research skills which will take students beyond the confines of the syllabus in their chosen subject area (*Extended Essay*)
- the development of a sense of social responsibility (*Creativity, Activity and Service*)

The Diploma Programme Illustrating the framework of the IB Diploma



Course Structure

- 6 academic subjects studied over two years, one to be selected from each of Groups 1 to 6
- Every subject and level are of equal importance (i.e. a 7 grade can be achieved in HL Physics and Spanish abinitio)
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK)
- Extended Essay (EE)
- Creativity, Activity and Service (CAS), approximately 150 hours.

Styles of Learning

- Critical and high order thinking and analytical skills
- University level essay writing skills
- International in outlook and focus
- Encourages inter-cultural understanding
- TOK threads run through all academic subjects
- Opportunity in the EE for in depth research beyond the confines of the syllabus
- 3 subjects studied at Higher Level and 3 at Standard Level
- Co-operative learning through the Group 4 project
- Immersion second language study
- Prepares students very well for the demands of university study.

Method of Assessment

- Up to 50% Internal and 80% External assessable components across all academic subjects. Measured against international standards
- Internal assessments either integrated into the teaching programme or completed by end of session 2 of Year 12
- Wide range of types of internal assessment which are internally marked and externally moderated
- Oral presentations in all languages
- TOK essay and EE completed end Term 1/early Term 2 of Year 12 to allow for maturity and experience to be incorporated into the finished works
- All subjects contribute equally to the final Diploma score allowing for a true measure of academic achievement
- Criterion referenced assessment with performance measured against well defined levels of achievement consistent from one examination session to the next and applied equally to all schools
- Graded on a 45 point scale, minimum requirement of 24 points for award of Diploma, subject to additional constraints.

Student Requirements

- Likes to be challenged and to question
- Willing to participate and become an active learner
- Willing to develop independent learning, good time management and organizational skills
- Willing to develop as a well rounded individual and an engaged global citizen.

Constraints on Subject Selection

- Where unavoidable subject clashes occur within the timetable, students will be counselled to consider alternative subject selections.
- Some languages will not be available for examination in November 2025 and the written papers will have to be taken as a split session entry in May 2025. Internal assessment work will be completed early 2025.
- The school reserves the right to make alterations to the course offered. Timetable, curriculum and resource issues will be taken into account in the provision of subjects.

The IB Diploma is specifically focused towards providing entry to tertiary education. Consequently the minimum score for which the IB Diploma is awarded (subject to additional constraints) is 24. This translates to an ATAR of between 68 and 70. At the conclusion of the course, if a student has not been awarded the Diploma, then no equivalent ATAR will be given (UAC will calculate an ATAR equivalent for students who receive a DP score but not awarded a diploma from 20 – 23).

Clearly, if a student is not confident of being able to achieve a Diploma score of 24 they should consider carefully whether the IB Diploma is best suited to their needs. Students should be achieving a B grade + in their high school subjects to consider studying the IB diploma.

University Entry

The IB Diploma score is converted to an ATAR for entry to ACT/NSW/Vic universities and provides direct and recognised entry to universities worldwide including Australia. Please refer to UAC website for conversion table <https://uac.edu.au>

IB Learner Profiles

IB programmes aim to develop internationally minded people who are striving to become :	
Inquirers	Their natural curiosity is nurtured. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct constructive inquiry and research and become independent active learners. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
Knowledgeable	They explore concepts, ideas and issues which have global relevance and importance. In so doing, they acquire, and are able to make use of, a significant body of knowledge across a range of disciplines.
Critical thinkers	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to approach complex problems and make reasoned decisions.
Communicators	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication.
Risk-takers	They approach unfamiliar situations with confidence and forethought and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are courageous and articulate in defending those things in which they believe.
Principled	They have a sound grasp of the principles of moral reasoning. They have integrity, honesty, a sense of fairness and justice and respect for the dignity of the individual.
Caring	They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to action and service to make a positive difference to the environment and to the lives of others.
Open-minded	Through an understanding and appreciation of their own culture, they are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and cultures and are accustomed to seeking and considering a range of points of view.
Well-balanced	They understand the importance of physical and mental balance and personal well-being for themselves and others. They demonstrate perseverance and self-discipline.
Reflective	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and personal development. They are able to analyse their strengths and weaknesses in a constructive manner.

Academic Honesty

A8.1 The meaning of academic honesty

A candidate's work submitted for assessment, including work for internal assessment, must be the authentic work of that candidate. Failure to comply with this requirement will result in no grade being awarded for the subject concerned.

For further details refer to the IB publication *Academic honesty* and the relevant articles in the *General regulations: Diploma Programme*.

A8.3 Malpractice

Malpractice most commonly involves collusion or plagiarism. However, there are other ways in which a candidate may be in breach of regulations. For example, a candidate may:

- duplicate work to meet the requirements of more than one assessment component
- fabricate data for an assignment
- take unauthorized material into an examination room
- disrupt an examination by an act of misconduct, such as distracting another candidate
- exchange, support, or attempt to support, the passing on of information that is or could be related to the examination
- fail to comply with the instructions of the invigilator or other member of the school's staff responsible for the conduct of the examination
- impersonate another candidate
- steal examination papers
- disclose or discuss the content of an examination paper with a person outside the immediate school community within 24 hours after the examination
- use an unauthorized calculator during an examination.

Note that a candidate will be found guilty of malpractice if unauthorized material (for example, an electronic device other than a permitted calculator, notes, a mobile/cell phone) is taken into an examination, regardless of whether an attempt is made to use that material. For all cases of malpractice in relation to the examinations, the coordinator must send a report to IB Answers.

The duplication of the same work for two different assessment components constitutes malpractice. For example, the same piece of work cannot be submitted to meet the requirements of both internal assessment and the extended essay. If the same topic is chosen for different assessment component, that topic must be treated completely differently - otherwise it may be considered a breach of regulations.

A8.5 Authenticating candidates' work

The candidates are responsible for ensuring that the final version of their work is authentic. Candidates themselves must bear the consequences if they submit any work for assessment that is not their own, regardless of whether the plagiarism was deliberate or a careless act.

Language Study in the IB Diploma

It is a requirement of the programme that students study at least one language from Group 2.

Language abinitio and language B are language acquisition courses designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken.

It is important that students are placed appropriately in the language course that is most suited to their needs and which will provide them with an appropriate level of academic challenge:

<i>Abinitio SL only</i> 0-2 yrs	Is for a beginner who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has little or no previous experience of the language• Is taught outside the country or countries where the language is spoken
<i>Language B SL</i> 2-5 yrs	Is for a language student who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has 2 to 5 years experience of the target language• Is not taught other subjects in the target language• Is normally taught outside a country where the language is spoken
<i>Language B HL</i> 5yrs +	Is for a language student who: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Has over 5 years experience of the target language• Is not taught other subjects in the target language• Is normally taught outside a country where the target language is spoken

Aims of Subject by Group

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE (A-E grade)

The aims of the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) programme are to engage students to reflect and question bases of knowledge, so they:

- develop a fascination with the richness of knowledge
- develop an awareness of how knowledge is constructed, critically examined, evaluated and renewed
- reflect on their experiences as learners and make connections between academic disciplines
- encourage an interest in the diversity of ways of thinking
- consider the relationship between knowledge, the community and the individual.

EXTENDED ESSAY (A-E grade)

The extended essay is an in-depth study of a focused topic within a subject. It is intended to promote high level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity. It allows students to:

- pursue independent research
- develop research and communication skills
- develop skills of critical and creative thinking
- engage in a systematic process of research
- experience the excitement of intellectual discovery.

CREATIVITY, ACTIVITY AND SERVICE (Pass/Fail)

The aims of the CAS requirement are to enable students to develop:

- an appreciation of the potential of the human mind and spirit
- knowledge, skills and understanding
- an awareness of humanitarian issues across the world
- a recognition that education imposes lifelong ethical responsibilities
- a willingness to inquire and an enjoyment of discovery
- confidence in their ability to initiate change, both individually and collaboratively
- autonomy and self-reliance
- an appreciation of their own and others' talents.

The Diploma Points Matrix

Total 7 points per subject (total 42) and bonus points TOK and EE (total 3) =
45 points

		Theory of knowledge					
		Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	No grade N
Extended essay	Grade A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade C	2	2	1	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade E	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition
	No grade N	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition

- B + C combination now results in 2 additional points (previously 1 point).
- A + E combination now results in zero points and a failing condition (previously 1 point).

GROUP 1 - LANGUAGE A1 WORLD LITERATURE

The aims of the Language A1 programme at both Higher and Standard Levels are to:

- encourage a personal appreciation of literature and develop an understanding of the techniques involved in literary criticism
- develop the students' powers of expression, both in oral and written communication and provide the opportunity of practising and developing the skills involved in writing and speaking in a variety of styles and situations
- introduce students to a range of literary works of different periods, genres, styles and contexts
- broaden the students' perspective through the study of works from other cultures and languages
- introduce students to ways of approaching and studying literature, leading to the development of an understanding and appreciation of the relationships between different works
- develop the ability to engage in close, detailed analysis of written text
- promote in student's enjoyment and a lifelong interest in Literature.

GROUP 2 - LANGUAGE B: HL, SL, ab initio, FRENCH, GERMAN, JAPANESE, ITALIAN, SPANISH, CHINESE, KOREAN.

Group 2 consists of a range of Language courses accommodating the different levels of linguistic proficiency. There is a single set of group 2 aims, common to all the courses, but the objectives are differentiated according to what the candidates are expected to be able to demonstrate at the end of each course.

The aims of Group 2 are to:

- enable students to understand and use the language they have studied in a range of contexts and for a variety of purposes
- enable students to use the language appropriately
- encourage through the study of texts and through social interaction, an awareness and appreciation of the different perspectives of people from other cultures
- develop students' awareness of the role of language in relation to other areas of knowledge
- provide the opportunity for enjoyment, creativity and intellectual stimulation through knowledge of a language
- provide students with a basis for further study, work and leisure through language
- develop students' awareness of the relationship between the languages and cultures with which they are familiar.

GROUP 3 - INDIVIDUALS AND SOCIETIES

The aims of subjects in Group 3 are to:

- encourage the systematic and critical study of: human experience and behaviour; physical, political, economic and social environments; the history and development of social and cultural institutions
- develop in the student the capacity to identify, to analyse critically and to evaluate theories, concepts and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society
- enable the student to collect, describe, analyse and interpret complex data and source material and to test hypotheses
- develop an awareness in the student that human attitudes and beliefs are widely diverse and that the study of society requires an appreciation of such diversity
- enable the student to recognize that the knowledge and methodologies of the subjects in group 3 are contestable and that their study requires the acceptance of uncertainty.

Economics

- provide students with a core knowledge of Economics
- encourage students to think critically about Economics
- promote an awareness and understanding of internationalism in economics
- encourage students' development as independent learners
- enable students to distinguish between positive and normative economics
- enable students to recognize their own tendencies for bias.

Psychology

- understands and/or uses diverse methods of psychological inquiry
- develops an appreciation of the eclectic nature of Psychology
- develops an awareness of how applications of Psychology in everyday life are derived from psychological theories
- develops an understanding of different theoretical processes to interpret behaviour, and to be aware of how these processes lead to the construction and evaluation of psychological theories
- develops an understanding of the biological, social and cultural influences on human behaviour
- ensures that ethical practices and responsibilities are implemented in psychological inquiry
- interprets and/or conducts psychological research to apply the resulting knowledge for the benefit of human beings.

History (Modern)

- develops a lasting interest in History
- develops an ability to use and communicate historical knowledge and understanding
- promotes a better understanding of the present through an understanding of the past
- develops an international awareness and understanding of people living in a variety of places at different times
- promotes a developing appreciation and understanding of History as a discipline, including the nature and diversity of its sources, methods and interpretations
- develops the acquisition and understanding of historical knowledge in breadth and in depth, and from different cultures.

GROUP 4 - EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCES BIOLOGY, CHEMISTRY, PHYSICS, EXERCISE SCIENCE, ENVIRONMENTAL SYSTEMS (SL ONLY)

Through studying any of the group 4 subjects, students should become aware of how scientists work and communicate with each other. While the “scientific method” may take on a wide variety of forms, it will generally involve the formation, testing and modification of hypotheses through observation and measurement under the controlled conditions of an experiment. It is this approach, along with the falsifiability of scientific hypotheses that distinguishes the experimental sciences from other disciplines and characterizes each of the subjects within group 4.

It is in this context that all the Diploma Programme experimental science courses should aim to:

- encourage an understanding of the relationships between scientific disciplines and the overarching nature of the scientific method.
- develop an appreciation of the possibilities and limitations associated with science and scientists
- raise awareness of the moral, ethical, social, economic and environmental implications of using science and technology
- develop and apply the students’ information technology skills in the study of science
- develop experimental and investigative scientific skills
- engender an awareness of the need for, and the value of, effective collaboration and communication during scientific activities

- develop an ability to analyse, evaluate and synthesise scientific information
- enable students to apply and use a body of knowledge, methods and techniques which characterize science and technology
- provide a body of knowledge, methods and techniques which characterize science and technology
- provide opportunities for scientific study and creativity within a global context which will stimulate and challenge students.

GROUP 5 - MATHEMATICS
Mathematics Analysis and Approaches HL/SL
Mathematics Applications and Interpretations SL

The aims of all courses in group 5 are to enable students to:

- appreciate the multicultural and historical perspectives of all group 5 courses
- enjoy the courses and develop an appreciation of the elegance, power and usefulness of the subjects
- develop logical, critical and creative thinking
- develop an understanding of the principles and nature of the subject
- employ and refine their powers of abstraction and generalization
- develop patience and persistence in problem solving
- appreciate the consequences arising from technological developments
- transfer skills to alternative situations and to future developments
- communicate clearly and confidently in a variety of contexts
- Maths Analysis and Approaches is equated to Specialist Core
- HL Maths consists of 2 classes – Specialist core and Specialist options.
- Mathematical Applications and Interpretations is equated to Maths Methods

GROUP 6 - THE ARTS

Music

The aims of the IBO Music programme are to:

- give students the opportunity to explore and enjoy the diversity of music throughout the world
- encourage students to develop perceptual skills through a breadth of musical experiences, where they will learn to recognize, speculate, analyse, identify, discriminate and hypothesize in relation to Music
- enable students to develop creatively their knowledge, abilities and understanding through performance and composition
- assist students to develop their potential as musicians both personally and collaboratively
- Students need to be able to read a musical score but a classical music background is not a prerequisite for this course.

Theatre

The aims of the programme in Theatre are to:

- help students understand the nature of the Theatre; to understand it by making it as well as by studying it; to understand it not only with their minds but with their senses, their bodies and their emotions;
- to understand the forms it takes in cultures other than their own; and through this understanding better to understand themselves, their society and their world.

Visual Arts

The aims of the Visual Arts course at Higher Level and Standard Level are to:

- provide students with opportunities to make personal, sociocultural and aesthetic experiences meaningful through the production and understanding of art
- exemplify and encourage an inquiring and integrated approach towards visual arts in their various historical and contemporary forms
- promote visual and contextual knowledge of art from various cultures
- encourage the pursuit of quality through experimentation and purposeful creative work in various expressive media
- enable students to learn about themselves and others through individual and, where appropriate, collaborative engagement with the Visual Arts.

Assessment Structure

General:

All subjects are assessed both internally and externally. Types of internal and external assessment that a student may have to submit are outlined below.

Internal Assessment

Portfolio
Project
Composition/performance
Performance skills and theatre production
Report writing
Taped orals
Dossier
Research workbook
Fieldwork
Experimental design
Guided coursework

External Assessment

Two or three written examination papers for most subjects
Literature essay for Language A1- English (HL)
Research project and taped presentation for Theatre
Music performance, creating and portfolio of diverse musical works
Art portfolio and comparative study

The respective weightings for each component vary between subjects. These are detailed on the following pages.

Assessment Criteria

All assessments are carried out against clearly set out criteria. These criteria will differ according to the particular subject.

Each criterion has a number of achievement levels and each achievement level is accompanied by a clear descriptor. The student must clearly meet the descriptor in order to be awarded that particular grade level.

Assessment Requirements

THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE

Internal Assessment

Students are to complete a TOK exhibition based on one of the TOK themes

External Assessment

Written essay on one from a choice of six prescribed titles issued by the IBO. Required length 1200-1600 words.

EXTENDED ESSAY

Students complete a 4000 word (max) academic paper in a subject area of choice within the Diploma (recommended from a HL subject). Each student is allocated a supervisor who mentors them throughout the process.

CAS

Completion of approximately 150 hours of activities. Each activity is recorded in Managebac – an online journal that is monitored by the CAS supervisor. Students reflect on their activities and are expected to make regular journal entries that will address specific learning outcomes. The new admission criteria for ANU is fully aligned with the IB CAS programme.

Narrabundah College IB subjects

Subject Groups – one from each subject group		
H= Higher level/S= Standard level/Ab (abinitio) = Beginning level (also classified as a Standard level) Students undertake 3 Higher level and 3 Standard level subjects		
Group 1 : Literature A1	World Literature	H or S
Group 2 : Language B Advanced (HL) Continuing (SL) Beginning) (Abinitio)	Chinese (Mandarin)	H or S or ab
	French	H or S or ab
	German (beginner May exam)	H or S or ab
	Italian (May exam)	H or S or ab
	Japanese	H or S or ab
	Spanish	H or S or ab
	Korean (no beginner & May exam)	H or S
Group 3 : Individuals and Societies	History	H or S
	Economics	H or S
	Psychology	H or S
	Environmental Systems and societies (ESS)	S
Group 4 : Experimental Science	Biology	H or S
	Chemistry	H or S
	Exercise Science	H or S
	Physics	H or S
	Environmental Systems and societies (ESS)	S
Group 5 : Mathematics*	Mathematics Analysis and Approaches	H or S
	Mathematics Applications and Interpretations	S
Group 6 : Electives	Art	H or S
	Music	H or S
	Theatre	H or S
	A third modern language	H or S
	A second subject from Individuals and Societies	H or S
	A second science subject	H or S
	A second group 6 subject (Art/Music/Theatre) if ESS is selected	H or S

*Mathematics Analysis and Approaches H is 2 classes and equates to Specialist Core and Options
Mathematics Analysis and Approaches S is 1 class and equates to Specialist Core
Mathematics Applications and Interpretations S is 1 class and equates to Maths Methods

Frequently Asked Questions

What kind of student is a good candidate for the DP?

The DP is a rigorous challenging course of study. Success throughout the programme depends on a student's dedication to do his or her best, willingness to be organized in order to complete the work while leading a full, balanced life, and a strong commitment to learning in and beyond the classroom.

Do students enrolled in the IB at Narrabundah College have the obligation to complete the ATAR?

Yes, Narrabundah College is a government school which has been offering the IB Diploma Programme for over 42 years. Students undertake this internationally recognised programme while studying for an ACT Senior Secondary Certificate.

Is the workload double for students completing the IB Diploma in conjunction with the ATAR diploma?

No, ATAR courses cover most of the IB content and ATAR assessments are an excellent preparation for the IB assessments. Specific IB content will be covered in tutorials in the second year of the programme.

Can IB students study any subjects offered at Narrabundah College?

No, they must study 6 academic subjects from the list of subjects in Group 1 to 6.

What is Higher Level (HL) and Standard Level (SL)?

To earn the IB Diploma, a student will take exams in six different subject areas at the end of senior year. Three of these exams will be in courses that are "Higher Level" and three are courses that are "Standard Level". We do not offer 4 HL subjects.

Are SL subjects given the same weighting as HL subjects?

All subjects regardless of their level, are assessed out of a maximum of 7 points and is criteria based.

Do DP teachers receive special training?

All DP teachers receive professional development in the IB's approaches to teaching and approaches to learning from certified IB workshop leaders. This is a requirement for IB World Schools implementing the DP.

How is an IB score calculated?

Each subject is marked on a seven-point scale. The three core components can contribute a maximum of three points, bringing the total IB points that a student can score to 45. This equates to an ATAR of 99.95, which is the maximum any student studying either the ATAR or IB Diploma can score. Student results are determined by performance against set criteria, not by each student's position in the overall rank order, as is the case with the ATAR.

Is the IB Diploma Programme recognised by all Australian universities?

Yes, all universities throughout Australia recognise the IB Diploma and a number of universities have implemented early offers for IB students.

How does an IB score compare with an ATAR rank?

The Universities Admissions Centre (UAC) calculates a UAC rank that is based on a student's overall Diploma score. This rank is comparable to an ATAR and is available from the UAC website.

Can an IB Diploma student switch to the ATAR if they decide the Diploma is not suitable for them?

Yes. Students must however remain in the program until the end of the first session of Year 11. There is no refund of the IB enrolment fee.

Can students change their subject choices part-way through the Diploma Programme?

Students are able to make changes to their subject choices but would need to do so at the earliest convenience and give due consideration to any additional pressure this decision would make on their study commitments. The Diploma Programme is a two-year course, with most examinations held at the end of Year 12.

How can I learn more about the IB and DP?

Visit the IB website at www.ibo.org
