

CONFERENCE OF THE AMERICAS REPORT

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CANCUN, MEXICO

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IB Americas Information

The largest DP countries in the Americas:

US (783 Diploma Programmes)

Canada (148 Diploma Programmes)

Mexico (59 Diploma Programmes)

Ecuador (50 Diploma Programmes)

Ecuadorian government project:

In January, 2012 the president of Ecuador decided to implement the DP in 500 schools over the next 5 years.

In Buenos Aires their objective is to bring the DP to one public school in each borough. The Heads of 25 schools will be trained in August, out of which 14 will apply for candidacy.

Comparison:

- 2011
 - 78 new candidate schools
 - 82 authorization visits
 - 169 self studies
- 2012
 - 132 new candidate schools
 - 53 authorization/verification visits
 - 152 self studies and 5 evaluation visits (for pilot programs)

Major Developments in DP

- World Studies EE (IB is encouraging students to undertake an inter-disciplinary essay through the WSEE
 - An inter-disciplinary study of an **issue of contemporary significance**
 - Must have a clearly framed research question that addresses a global issue through a “local” example(s)
 - Must draw on disciplinary expertise rigorously and selectively
 - Must integrate IB disciplines productively
 - Must show the development of global consciousness in a researcher’s reflection space

New DP Courses

- Global Politics SL/HL (first teaching 2015)
 - To critically engage with new perspectives and approaches to politics in order to better make sense of our changing world (group 3)
- Sports, Health & Exercise Science (SL)
 - Incorporates the disciplines of anatomy, physiology, biomechanics, psychology and nutrition in sport, health and exercise (group 4)

The new OCC should be released third quarter 2012

There is a summary of academic research on the IB Diploma at:

<http://www.ibo.org/research/resources/documents/dpresearchreview.pdf>

Impact Studies for the Diploma Programme: You can find the lists of studies in progress, as well as previous studies at:

<http://www.ibo.org/research/policy/programmevalidation/diploma/>

During unannounced examination inspections in Nov, 2011 and May, 2012 the main findings were:

- Before leaving the examination room the invigilator did not place the candidates' answer cover sheets/scripts in a plastic envelope provided by the IB Assessment Centre (except where an examination is split between rooms).
- A large working clock was not placed in view of all candidates.
- The start and finish times of the examination(s) were not written on a board/flip-chart in clear view of all candidates.
- A copy of the poster of *Conduct of the examinations: notice to candidates* was not on display in or outside the examination room.

Self-Studies 2011: Main Findings:

Matters to be addressed:

- Lack of or adequate assessment and language policies
- TOK in one year and more than 2 SLs in one year
- Unsuccessful diplomas

TOK Changes:

Assessment: Instead of being assessed using 4 distinct criteria the essay and presentation will be assessed using a **global impression** approach. This approach was trialled on TOK essays in the May, 2011 exam session with an encouraging increase in reliability.

4 new ways of knowing and 2 new areas of knowledge have been added, giving teachers greater choice and flexibility when designing their TOK course. Teachers still select 6 areas of knowledge and 4 ways of knowing to focus on, as covering all of them would be unrealistic in the time available.

The TOK subject guide has more detailed explanations and there is more and improved teacher support material.

CAS Changes:

CAS will be renamed **Creativity, Activity, Service (Action is changing to ACTIVITY)**

Recommendation for weekly hours will be removed – replaced with weekly activities ongoing over 18 months.

The CAS guide will be rewritten with greater clarity, clear emphasis on the components of CAS, and guidelines for each section of CAS made evident.

Learning outcomes reviewed and rewritten, reduced from eight to seven

The criteria for a CAS activity will be highlighted in the guide

Explicit movement towards: “think global, act local”

At least one project is required during the CAS programme. One month is recommended as a minimum amount of time on the project

Students must work collaboratively

Schools completing the self-study will have to specify an amount of money (in their budget) devoted solely to CAS. (students should not have to pay for anything related to CAS)

DP Core Update

- The core of the program is developing more coherence. This does not mean similarity, but more that each element complements each other. They all have common aims
- Going to be promoted as stand-alone courses
- In the future – no points for each of the elements. Student will still get grades for TOK & EE.

Ideas from breakouts:

- Design a Moodle “class” for the EE. Students are required to complete modules independently by certain dates during the first semester of their junior year. This way you can make sure they are learning what they need to best be prepared to write the EE. Have them submit the EE drafts via the Moodle

IB Assessment Considerations for DP:

- Commitment to ensure IB assessments increasingly reflect & reward the ATL (Approaches To Learning) skills more.
- More advice in DP on good formative assessments
- Planned for 2014-15: an IB student handbook that includes self-management skills
- Planned for 2014-15: provision of a coordinator’s pack with mini-lessons on ATL (Approaches to Learning)
- Commitment not to over-assess our students. IB says they’re “trimming” assessments.
 - Math will improve
 - Group 4 will be better
 - Language A slipped by this commitment...its IA is twice as long

EE Update:

- New guide will be on OCC December 2014
- First assessments will be May, 2017
- Consideration of EE being entirely disciplined. (EE should incorporate at least 2 disciplines if possible)
- Considering name change to “Research Essay”
- More support will be available for superisors
- The OCC contains information/videos on EE

School-Based Syllabus (SBS)

- These are not part of the Hexagon, but are attached to it. They are part of the diploma results, but don’t satisfy a subject requirement.
- Some of the new SBS’s are:
 - Art History
 - Classical Greek & Roman Studies
 - Science Technology & Society
 - Astronomy
 - Marine Science