



Archbishop MacDonald International Baccalaureate

updated Jan 2026

What is the IB Program?

The IB Programme is an internationally recognized curriculum that is done concurrently with the Alberta curriculum. These programmes complement one another to give students an enriched educational experience that is recognized globally by universities and employers.

IB Students:

- have a 'can do' attitude
- seek solutions and learn from their mistakes
- are driven by a desire to learn

What is an IB Diploma?

A separate Diploma earned by students who complete:

6 IB Courses: including 3 courses at the higher level (HL), 3 at the standard level (SL)

1 course from each of the Groups 1 to 5

1 course from either Group 2, 4, or 6

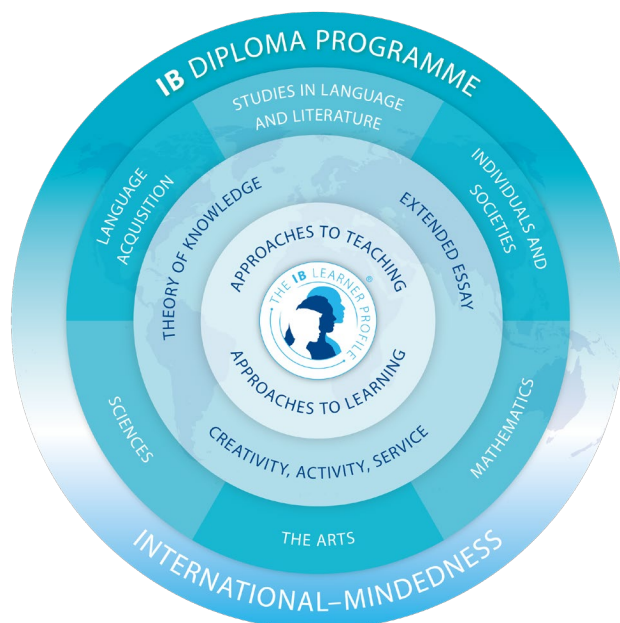
[Extended Essay](#) (research paper in a subject of choice)

[Theory of Knowledge 25/35](#) (credits Religion 25 & 35)

[Creativity, Activity, Service \(CAS\)](#)

What is an IB Transcript?

A separate transcript that lists the IB courses a student has completed with their IB grade.



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IB common terms/acronyms

IBO - International Baccalaureate Organization

IB - International Baccalaureate

DP - Diploma Program

HL - Higher level (240 hours)

SL - Standard Level (150 hours)

ab initio- (beginner)

EE - Extended Essay (research essay in subject of choice)

TOK - Theory of Knowledge

CAS - Creativity, Activity, Service

IA - Internal Assessment

EA - External Assessments (Exams)

IOA - Internal Oral Assessment

Y1 - Year 1 (students in their first year of the DP program)

Y2 - Year 2 (students in their last year of the DP program)

Anticipating - students who complete an IB course in gr. 11

Predicted Grades - IB grade 1-7 given by your teacher

IB Diploma - earned by a Full IB candidate with 24/45 pts

IB Transcript - list of official grades in subjects completed

Core - includes EE, TOK and CAS



Course Options & Schedule

IB Courses Offered

Group 1: English A: Literature HL

Group 2: French B: SL or HL, Spanish ab initio

Group 3: History of Europe HL

Group 4: Biology HL, Chemistry SL, Physics HL

Group 5: Mathematics: Analysis & Approaches SL

Group 6: Visual Arts/Theater Arts: SL or HL

Course offerings are based on those that align most closely with the Alberta curriculum.

Enhanced Programming

The Academic Enhanced Program at MAC integrates the IB philosophy into instruction to prepare students for success not only in the IB program but also in the Alberta Program. Emphasis on the IB learner profile and approaches to teaching and learning are used across the curriculum to prepare students for success in post-secondary.

IB Learner Profile

IB learners strive to be: inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, reflective.

These attributes encourage a holistic approach to learning with a focus on both academic and personal growth.



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Anticipating an IB Course-Fast Track

Students are encouraged to anticipate completion of an IB course and/or a 30-level diploma course in their grade 11 year in order to ensure all courses needed can be completed in their grade 12 year.

Considerations:

- are 2 or 3 sciences needed
- only IB SL courses can be anticipated
- check university entrance requirements
- complete one or two 20 level courses in grade 10
- choose from the following options: French SL, Art SL, Chemistry SL, PE, Computing Science
- complete either French 30IB SL or Chemistry 30IB SL in grade 11
- complete one non IB science at the 30 level

How will IB affect my grades?

IB content that is not a part of the Alberta curriculum is assessed formatively. Most content from the IB and AB curricula overlap, and the elevated discussions and alternative approaches practiced offer students the opportunity to excel in their classes. The IB curriculum is complimentary, not necessarily more difficult.



Recognition & Benefits

CAS Creativity, Activity, Service

IB encourages students to engage in experiences that help them become active, compassionate individuals who strive to make themselves better and the world they live in.

- CAS is completed over an 18 month period
- minimum of one student lead project
- meet scholarship & award criteria
- have balance in personal & academic life

Will I have time for extracurricular?

Absolutely! Being involved in extracurricular activities are a key component of IB.

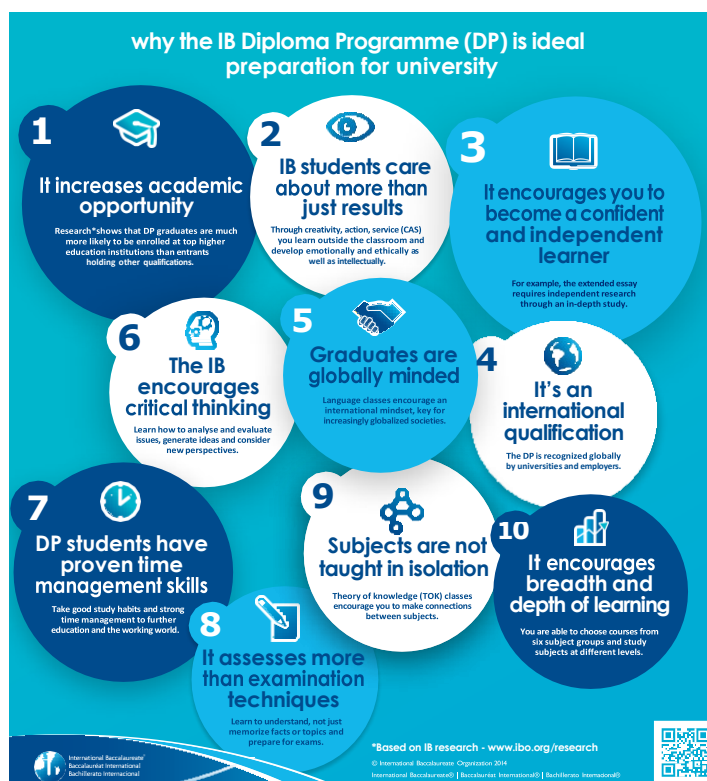
IB students are often heavily involved in athletics, the arts, music, drama, social justice and student leadership. Students participate in a range of activities both within the school and the wider community.

These experiences develop valuable skills that help students stand out when applying for awards and scholarships.

Research, Writing & Lab Skills

Students practice skills required in post-secondary including:

- writing research questions
- academic research & citation
- lab design & experimentation
- independent research & study
- academic writing across subject areas
- access to seminars at the U of A libraries



Teacher Professionalism & Expertise

IB teachers are dedicated to learning and complete certifications to teach IB curricula. IB teachers have the opportunity to be a part of a global community of educators who work collaboratively to develop student resources & moderate IB assessments.

Strengths of an IB Education

IB students develop transferable and lifelong skills and attributes such as critical thinking, international mindedness, creativity, agency, and resilience. IB students have better time management, are not as overwhelmed by workload, have experience with high stakes exams that are externally moderated, and are less likely to 'give up'. IB students have a competitive edge - studies show that IB students transition well into post-secondary and perform better when they graduate. Check out scholarship opportunities [here](#).



MAC IB Course Sequence

	Alberta Academic Enhanced Program	IB Diploma Programme Year 1	IB Diploma Programme Year 2
Group 1	English 10-1 Enhanced	English 20-1 IB	English 30-1 IB & English Lit 35
Group 2	French 10 Enhanced Spanish 10 Enhanced FLA 10 Enhanced	French 20 IB SL Spanish 20 IB ab initio FLA 20 IB HL	French 30 IB SL Spanish 30 IB ab initio FLA 30 IB HL
Group 3	Social 10-1 Enhanced	Social 20-1 IB	Social 30-1 IB & History 35
Group 4	Science 10-1 Enhanced	Biology 20 IB Chemistry 20 IB Physics 20 IB	Biology 30 IB & Bio 35 Chem 30 IB & Chem 35 Physics 30 IB & Physics 35
Group 5	Math 10-1 C Enhanced	Math 20-1 IB & Math 30-1 IB	Math 31 IB & Math 35
Group 6	Art 10 Enhanced Drama 10 Enhanced	Art 20 IB Drama 20 IB	Art 30 IB Drama 30 IB

Post Secondary Planning

Review entrance requirements for each of the institutions that you are considering applying to. Requirements & calculations vary by program.

Plan ahead and get as much education as you can before you go to post-secondary. The extra work you do in high school will be well worth it as you move forward. Use your time wisely and take courses that will provide you with extra options when you are applying so you can maximize your admission average.

[UAlberta IB Admissions](http://ualberta.ca/IBAdmissions)





MAC IB: FAQs

Does IB really matter?

It does! Although Alberta has a strong curriculum, IB reinforces key skills that help students to be successful in post-secondary. Research has shown that IB students have higher success rates, including completion and entrance into specialized programs. IB gives students important recognition in a competitive world.

Are there fees if I want to take an IB course?

ECSD largely subsidizes the IB program for students who enroll, however, there is a \$150/year charge to a maximum of \$300. This fee applies whether you take 1 course or a full diploma.

Who marks the IB assessments?

MAC teachers provide a predicted grade based on in-class work, but the final grades for IB assessments are externally moderated by IB examiners from around the world. Standardized assessments and criteria ensure students are graded consistently & objectively in each subject area.

What does grading look like in IB?

Students will receive an Alberta grade as well as an IB grade. IB assessments are graded on a scale of 1-7. Students need to have a 90%+ to earn a 6 or 7. Final IB grades are based largely on externally moderated coursework and IB exams in the grade 12 year. No formal IB grade is awarded until the end of Year 2.

Is there a pre-requisite grade to go into the Diploma Programme?

All students have the opportunity to enroll. Students who have a 75% or higher tend to be more successful in their IB courses, however prior academic success is less of an indicator than a student's determination to do their best. Teacher recommendations are highly valued, as well as consideration of attendance, missed exams, late assignments, engagement in class and work/study habits.

How many points do you need for an IB Diploma?

Full IB students must earn a minimum of 24/45 points to receive an IB Diploma with no mark below 3.

Do I have to do Full IB?

No. Students can take individual IB courses of their choice as a course candidate, however CAS, TOK and EE are only for full IB students. At MAC, we recommend taking as many IB courses as you can handle, leaving high school with as much education as possible!

What will my schedule look like in grade 10?

Students who are interested in pursuing IB should focus on an academic schedule. Take options that can be used for university admission and try to take at least one 20 level course in grade 10.

I am afraid I will be overwhelmed. Is IB too much work?

Doing well in school is a lot of work. Successful students learn to be organized, prioritize tasks, stick to schedules and work efficiently. If you already work hard in school, it will be similar. IB is different work.

More Information & Resources

[Benefits for Students](#)

[Why IB students Succeed](#)

[IBO Blog: Inspiring Alumni](#)





IB Student Perspectives



Over the years, I feel blessed to have had the opportunity to work with some amazing students in the IB programme. It is so rewarding to see the IB students gain confidence in their learning and develop leadership skills. The IB program challenges students to embrace challenges and grow as learners.

"IB highlights the importance of time management. A lot of my classes in university follow the hybrid format (pre-recorded or online) and come with the expectation of doing work independently, staying on track and meeting deadlines. IB encourages students to develop their own learning strategies and helps them have a better understanding of what works and what doesn't. It eases you into the university lifestyle and prepares you for some of the challenges."

"CAS has been one of the best and most surprising parts of full IB. It has shown me there is so much out there to explore and has allowed me to build a great portfolio of experiences."

"I chose IB to learn valuable lifelong skills, such as time-management, diligence, and perseverance. Furthermore, the IB program at MAC has allowed me to develop a strong work ethic and academic rigour in preparation for post-secondary and career success. I have learned the importance of communicating with others to understand different perspectives."

"I chose IB for the opportunity to study anywhere in the world, however, now that I have done some IB classes, I have found them so much more interesting than regular programming!"

"My attitude towards learning has definitely evolved as a result of IB. I used to be focused on memorizing only surface-level aspects of a subject, but IB places a heavy focus on critical thinking which has been much more valuable. Being able to confidently carry out more independent learning and exploration has made me grow as a learner."

"As a partial IB student, I fully recommend joining the IB program. Full IB might seem daunting, but looking back at the two IB courses I took, English and French, my only regret is not taking more."

"Although I enjoy academic challenges, I shy away from socializing with new people. I have learned to take these risks, collaborate and have gained a lot more confidence."

"I would strongly recommend the IB programme to any student looking to get a head start in university. One of the most important benefits was when I entered first year; the adjustment was a bit easier with a similar workload to taking IB. Also, the transfer credit I received from my IB courses gave me the opportunity to take more option classes that interested me."

"Being a part of the IB programme helped me immensely in university! Writing essays and research papers has been a fundamental part of my post-secondary studies (bachelor's and master's degrees). Being exposed to academic writing, research and citing within the IB programme gave me a very big advantage when starting my studies."

"The IB program was valuable for exam preparation and writing skills. Not only are IB exams a similar style to those in university but the study methods I developed during IB helped me succeed in my first-year classes."

"I chose IB because I wanted to be surrounded by like-minded students who really care about their education. This has helped to motivate me."

"I love the challenge of the IB program and the academic enrichment it provides."

Aspiring and achieving:

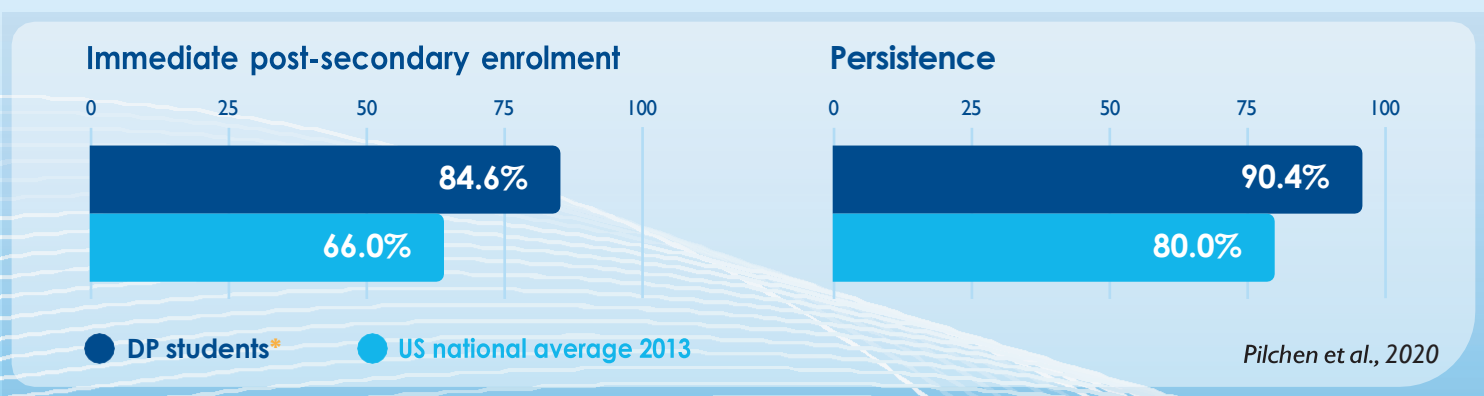
Highlighting DP and CP student research

An asterisk (*) indicates that the results focus on students pursuing the full DP, with all of its courses and requirements.

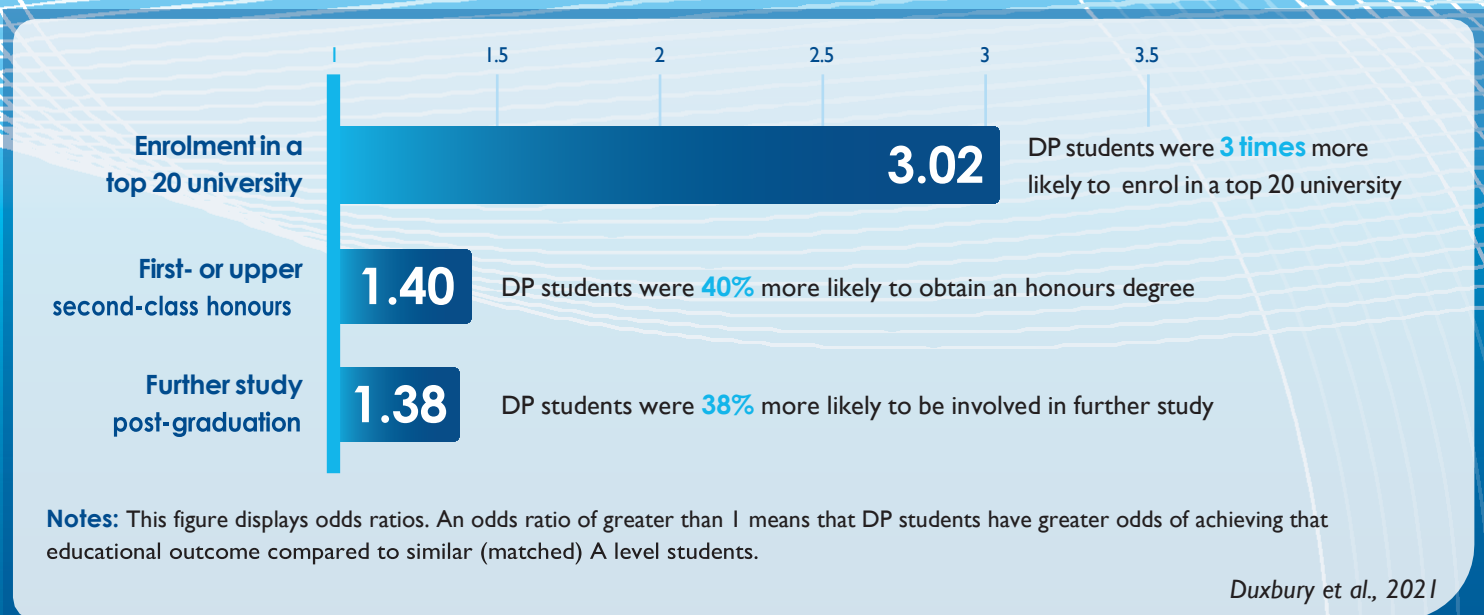
Based on a large international data set, by the end of the **Diploma Programme (DP)**, **98%** of students **aspired** to at least a bachelor's degree and **81%** aspired to a master's, doctoral or professional degree.¹

In line with previous research, about **85%** of DP students* in the United States (US) **enrolled in university immediately** after high school, compared to **66%** of all US high school graduates.

DP students were also more likely than other US students to continue on to their second year of university (**persistence**).²

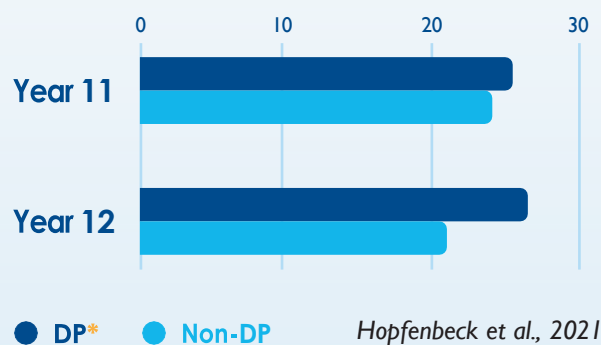


In the UK, DP students* were more likely to achieve many positive **higher education outcomes** compared to matched A level students.³





A study in Australia, England and Norway found that DP students* had significantly higher levels of **critical thinking** compared to their matched non-DP peers. The critical thinking advantage of DP students compared to non-DP students also increased from year 11 to year 12.⁴



At both the University of Toronto and the University of British Columbia in Canada, DP students were much more likely than non-DP students to enter **science faculties** compared to other fields of study.

University of Toronto

High school programme

Degree programme on entry	DP (%)	Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD)* (%)	French Immersion** (%)
Arts	29.8	48.0	62.0
Commerce	8.4	11.7	4.3
Engineering	11.7	8.2	8.1
Science	50.1	32.1	25.5

Notes: Due to rounding error, some columns may not total to 100%.

* Students who complete Ontario's traditional high school curriculum receive an Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD).

** French Immersion students provide a useful comparison to DP students in most Canadian contexts, as both sets of students may undergo selection processes to enter and/or remain enrolled in intensified and/or enriched alternative education programmes.

Davies and Guppy, 2022

University of British Columbia

High school programme

Degree programme on entry	DP (%)	Dogwood Diploma (DW)* (%)	French Immersion** (%)
Arts	25.5	36.9	39.6
Business/Commerce	9.4	8.3	8.3
Engineering	14.6	10.2	13.6
Forestry	0.0	5.1	0.0
Human kinetics	1.9	4.8	4.7
Land and food systems	2.7	11.0	2.6
Science	45.1	22.9	30.6

Notes: Due to rounding error, some columns may not total to 100%.

* British Columbia's traditional public high school curriculum is known as the "Dogwood Diploma" (DW).

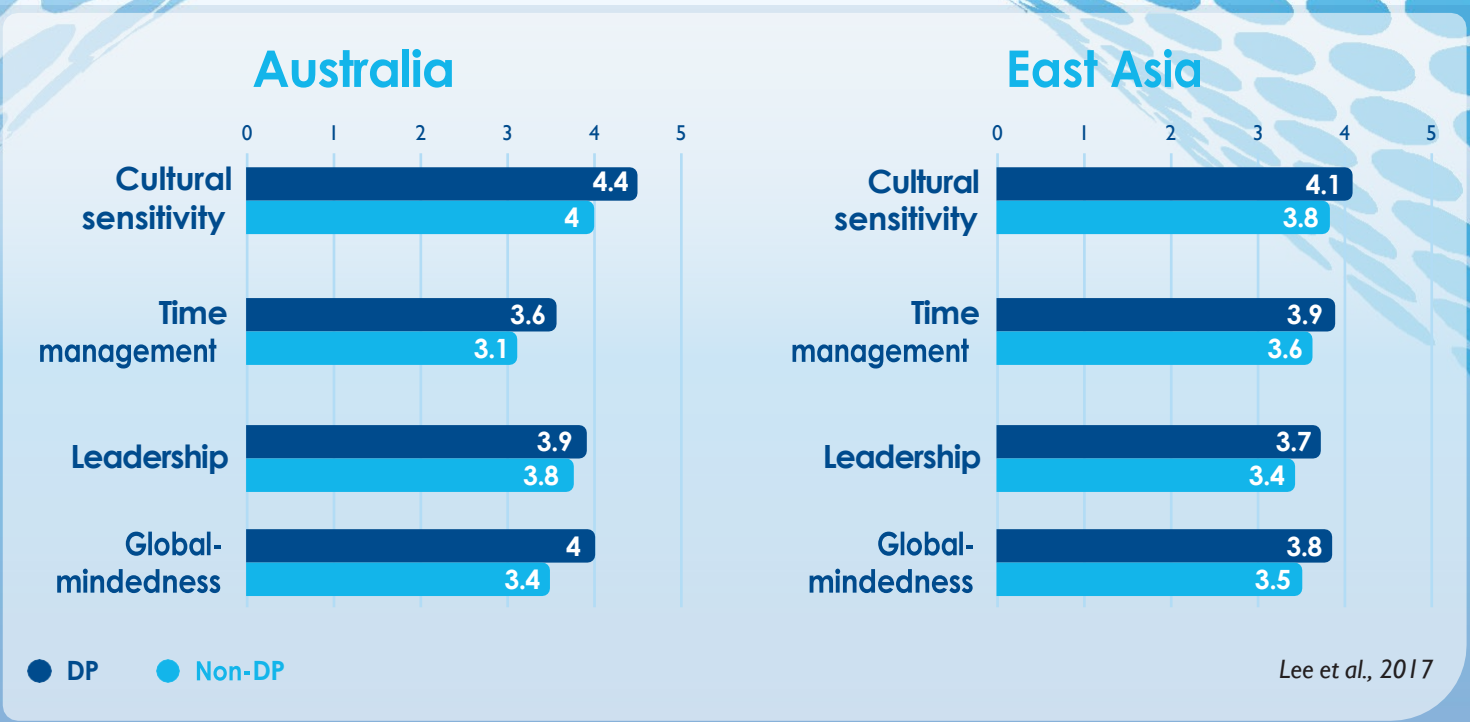
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Davies and Guppy, 2022

Additionally, compared to students with traditional high school diplomas in Ontario and British Columbia (OSSD or DW), DP students earned **higher university grades** were **less likely to drop out** of university and were **more likely to graduate in a timely manner**.⁵



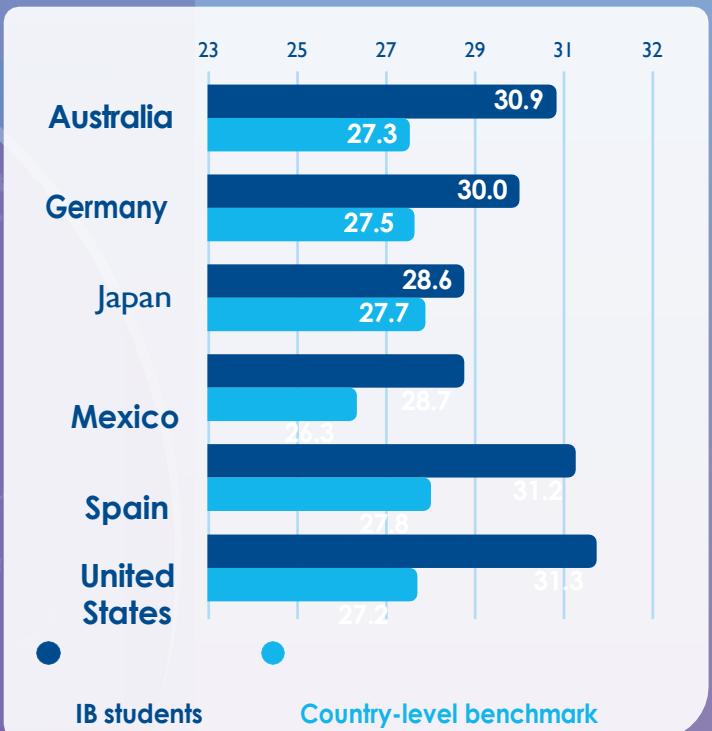
In comparison with non-DP peers, DP alumni at universities in **Australia** and **East Asia** reported higher capacities for a variety of **21st-century skills** (based on a five-point scale).⁶



Compared to young adults from a similar age range, **DP** and **Career-related Programme (CP)** students had higher levels of **global mindedness** across all six

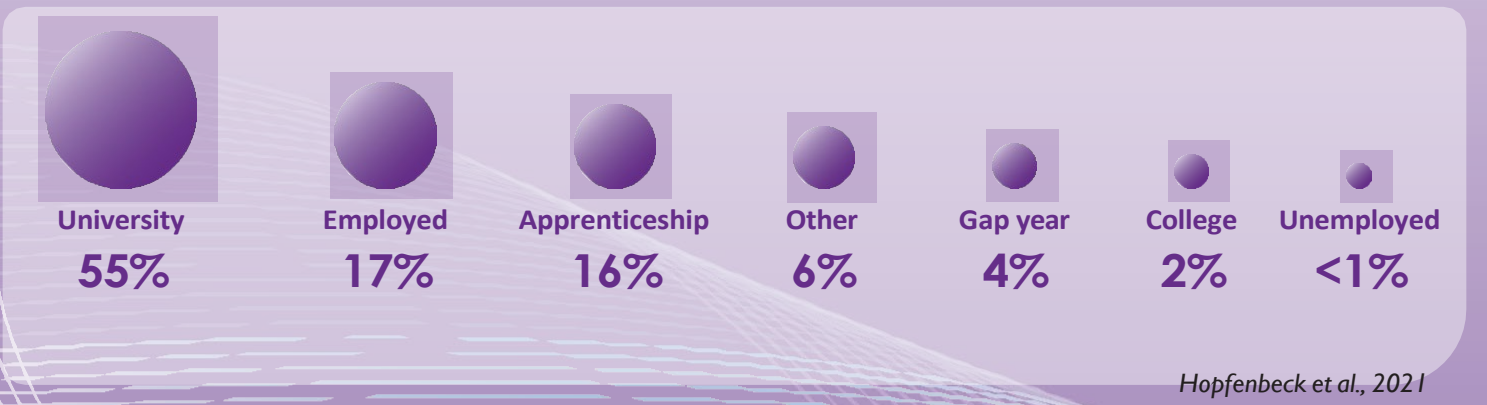
countries studied. In five out of six cases, these differences in global-mindedness levels were statistically significant.⁷

Notes: Countries shown in bold had a statistically significant difference between groups at a 5% level.

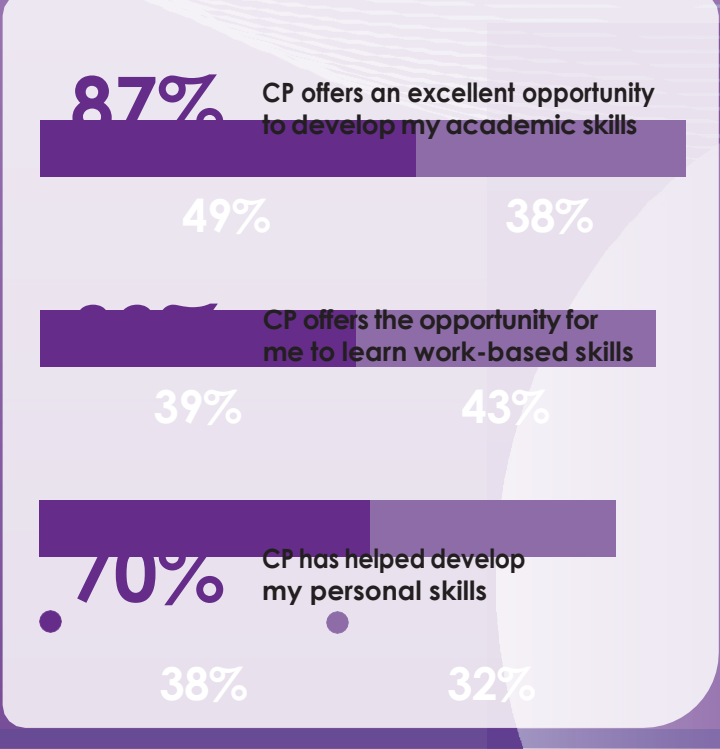


A study in the UK indicated that CP students were progressing and performing well at university with **89% continuing** on to their second year of study and **70%** achieving a first- or upper second-class **honours degree** (a higher percentage than Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) students—**66%**).⁸

Data from CP alumni in Kent, UK indicated that **55%** of former CP students were **enrolled in university**, **17%** were **employed**, **16%** were **engaged in apprenticeships** and fewer than **1%** were unemployed.



Students also believed the CP had helped to develop key skills for education, work and life, with **87%** agreeing that the CP had developed their **academic skills**, **82%** reporting that the CP had developed their **work-based skills** and **70%** agreeing that the CP had developed their **personal skills**.



Additionally,
92%

of these CP students successfully
completed the programme and
achieved the CP certificate.⁹

Definitely true Probably true

Hopfenbeck et al., 2021

¹ <https://ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies/educational-aspirations-of-international-baccalaureate-diploma-programme-students-2021/>
² <https://ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies/us-postsecondary-outcomes/>
³ <https://ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies/uk-higher-education-outcomes/>
⁴ <https://ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies/critical-thinking-skills-of-dp-students/>
⁵ <https://www.ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies/comparing-university-outcomes-of-dp-graduates-to-their-peers-in-toronto-and-vancouver-canada-2022/>
⁶ <https://ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies/a-study-of-the-post-secondary-outcomes-of-international-baccalaureate-diploma-programme-alumni-in-leading-universities-in-asia-pacific-2017/>
⁷ <https://ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/diploma-studies/global-mindedness-in-ib-schools-2021/>
⁸ <https://ibo.org/research/outcomes-research/cp-studies/cp-students-studying-at-uk-higher-education-institutions/>
⁹

Notes



Say yes
to new
ADVENTURES

ecsd.net/MACIB

