The IB Diploma Programme

I. **SSC plans for implementing the IB DP**

1. **SSC plan – When will the IB DP be introduced to SSC?**

   We intend to offer the two-year IB DP in S5 and S6 starting in the school year 2015-16. In September 2014, the IB DP bridging course will begin in S4. That means students in S1 in school year 2011/12 will have the chance to choose between the DSE and IB DP when they move into S4 in school year 2014/15.

2. **What will be the number of classes offering the IB DP?**

   The College is committed to offering the IB DP as part of the long-term curriculum. Because of our obligation to the Education Bureau to offer the local curriculum as well, we shall operate one to two IB classes in parallel with three or four DSE classes.

3. **What IB DP subjects will be offered and what are the reasons for choosing them?**

   When the IB DP is first introduced in September 2015, the following subjects are planned to be offered at both Higher and Standard Levels unless otherwise stated:

   - **English:** Language A (Language and Literature)
     Language B (Language)
   - **Chinese:** Language A (Language and Literature)
     Language B (Language)
   - **Individuals & Societies:** Business and Management
     Economics
   - **Experimental Sciences:** Biology
     Chemistry
     Physics
   - **Mathematics:** Mathematics
     Mathematical studies (at Standard Level only as stipulated by the IB) (under consideration)
   - **Arts:** Music

   These subjects are chosen based on the projection of students’ interest from choices of senior secondary student in previous years. A course will be opened on condition that there are sufficient students.
4. **Will other languages be offered in the Language B group?**

Since the College has been teaching two languages (Chinese and English) already in our curriculum, which meets the IB requirements, students have gained a head start in them. At present, there are no plans to offer a third language in our curriculum but if students plan to take a language other than these two, they can submit a request to the College to be considered on individual basis to be included as part of their IB DP study.

II. **Entrance requirements to IB DP at SSC**

5. **What are the entrance requirements for the IB DP at SSC? Can students prepare for them?**

Towards the end of S3, students will be assessed on their suitability for studying the IB DP. As far as the number of places allows, students will be admitted on the basis of:

A. Satisfactory academic results;
B. Teachers’ comments; and
C. ECA records in the school report.

These criteria are set in line with the nature of the IB DP, an academically challenging and balanced programme (including participation in community service) that requires motivation, self-management and willingness to think independently. SSC fosters these factors through our school curriculum which will enable students to prepare for Diploma Programme.

Students interested in enrolling in the IB DP are encouraged to contact the DP Coordinator for further advice.

III. **The IB DP Bridging Programme at S4 at SSC**

6. **What courses will there be in the bridging programme at S4? Who prepares and teaches the course?**

The IB DP demands that students possess certain prerequisites in subject knowledge, concepts and skills. Our teachers trained for teaching the IB DP, will scrutinize the curriculum requirements. Based on the groundwork that our students will need, teachers will prepare and teach the bridging courses. Students will study more or less the same subjects as they will in the IB DP supplemented by development of generic skills as required.

7. **Can a student who finishes S4 in the DSE at SSC be admitted to the IB DP at S5?**

The IB DP has requirements different from the DSE. The bridging programme is the best way to help students to adapt to the change before they start the DP. If a student wishes to apply for the DP after a year of DSE at S4, we shall assess his or her readiness to start the programme with an entrance test and consideration of his or her school reports as well as ECA records, just as in the case of an external applicant.
IV. Recognition of the IB DP by local universities

8. How well is the IB Diploma recognized by universities in Hong Kong?

Instead of taking part in the Joint University Programmes Admissions System (JUPAS) as candidates of the local secondary programme, IB students may apply for admission to local universities through the Non-JUPAS Admissions Scheme. (Please see [link](http://www.als.hku.hk/admission/applying-or-admission-info/hong-kong-students/non-jupas).) The IB Diploma is awarded to students who can achieve a minimum of 24 points (out of a possible 45). All eight institutions in Hong Kong recognize the IB Diploma for application for admission. Conditional offers are made on the basis of predicated grades. IB students have to apply separately to individual institutions and check specific departmental entrance requirements. However, there are no fixed quotas for students to be admitted with non-local qualifications.

9. Is there any quota for non-JUPAS applicants to local universities?

There are no fixed quotas for non-JUPAS applicants. The University of Hong Kong for instance, states that in the 2011 exercise, around 900 first-year students were admitted through the non-JUPAS scheme. (Source: [link](http://www.als.hku.hk/admission/faq/non-jupas))

10. Will an IB graduate be regarded as a local applicant or a non-local applicant?

According to the definition laid down by the University Grants Committee (UGC) referred to by the University of Hong Kong, “if a person requires a student visa/entry permit issued by the Director of Immigration to study in Hong Kong, he or she will be regarded as a non-local applicant. Local applicants are those who do not require a student visa to study in Hong Kong. An IB graduate who is a local resident is hence a local applicant.” (Source: [link](http://www.als.hku.hk/admission/applying-or-admission-info/hong-kong-students/non-jupas/fees-and-finance))

11. Do JUPAS and non-JUPAS students pay the same or different tuition fees?

The amount of tuition fees depends on the students’ resident status. According to the University of Hong Kong, “There are differential composition (tuition) fees for local and non-local students. Non-local students are persons entering Hong Kong for the purpose of education with a student visa/entry permit issued by the Director of Immigration.”

(Source: [link](http://www.als.hku.hk/admission/applying-or-admission-info/hong-kong-students/non-jupas/fees-and-finance))

V. University recognition of the IB DP and university performance of DP graduates

12. How do IB students compare with others in overseas university application?
According to a study in 2011 by the IB, “the average acceptance rate of IB students into university/college is 22 percentage points higher than the average acceptance rate of the total population [of the United States]. The acceptance rate of IB students into Ivy League institutions (Princeton, Yale, Brown, Harvard, Columbia, Cornell, Dartmouth, University of Pennsylvania) is between 3 and 13 percentage points higher compared to the total population acceptance rate [of the United States].”

For full details of the study, please refer to the 2011 IB Diploma Programme Graduate Destination Survey:

13. How do IB students compare with others in university success rate?

According to the IB, “Recent studies on IB Diploma Programme graduates in university confirm that they perform well and have significantly higher Grade Point Averages (GPAs) and higher graduation rates than students who did not complete the IB Diploma Programme. Scores on IB assessments are also significant predictor of success in university. … The IB assessment tasks evaluate students’ ability to think and process what they know rather than assessing rote learning skills. … Through the IB languages curriculum and the core components [of extended essay, theory of knowledge and community, action, service,] … IB students develop the ability to interpret, analyse, think critically and present arguments. … They also learn to research, write and present what they have learned.”


VI. IB DP assessments and predicted grades

14. How are IB DP students assessed? How are predicted grades in the IB DP given?

Student results are determined by performance against set standards, not by each student's position in the overall rank order. A variety of different methods are used to measure student achievement against the objectives for each course. Internal, teacher assessment is also used for most courses. This includes:

• oral work in languages
• fieldwork in geography
• laboratory work in the sciences
• investigations in mathematics
• artistic performances.

Assessments are checked by external examiners and normally contribute between 20% and 30% of the total mark. Some of the arts courses, for example, music and visual arts, have assessment of a major practical component, which can account for as much as 50% of the total mark.
Students’ predicted grades are based on their own internal assessment grades, and are useful for university application.

VII. Authorization for offering the IB DP and IB support for schools

15. How can the IB ensure that SSC can deliver the programme to IB standard?

The IB has high standards that schools must meet in their delivery of the programmes. Only authorized schools may be referred to as IB World Schools. Schools wishing to offer the Diploma Programme must be authorized by the IB before hand.

The authorization indicates that the IB trusts that the school has the staff, support and resources in place to implement the Programme. The authorization process, which the IB anticipates will normally take 2 to 3 years to complete, is the same for all schools and has been designed to support schools in the long run.

The authorization process consists of the following phases with various tasks for the school to ensure that schools are able to the preparation step by step to reach IB standards:

A. Consideration phase
   - Inform the IB of the interest to offer an IB programme and request additional information.
   - Conduct a feasibility study in which it analyses the IB philosophy, programme structure and requirements, compares its findings with the situation of the school and defines what needs to be done in order to implement the programme.

B. Request for candidacy
   - Conduct a preliminary analysis of the IB programme and of the consequences of its implementation.
   - Develop plans reflecting the commitment of the school to make the necessary adjustments to become an IB World School.
   - Submit the Application for Candidacy form with the required supporting documents to formally apply for the status of a candidate school.

C. Candidate phase, request for authorization and verification visit
   - Take necessary actions to address the IB requirements for authorization.
   - File the Application for Authorization when the school feels certain about the attainment of IB standards, usually, after a year or two of implementing the action plan. Arrange a visit to the school with the IB to verify the school’s claim that it has taken all the necessary actions and is prepared to become an IB World School.

16. Does IB provide support for schools in implementing IB programmes?

   - The IB organizes workshops for teachers and school administrators, each lasting for 3 days to “prepare [them] to implement the IB programme successfully. … Participants will gain an understanding of programme standards and practices discussed appropriate to the participants’ role (e.g. teacher, administrator, head of school, etc.)”
The IB promotes the continuous professional development of teachers by conducting advanced workshops and regional conferences and operating Online Curriculum Centre (OCC) where teachers of candidate and authorized schools can obtain IB publications and teaching materials and can participate in online forums on programme-related topics with their colleagues from IB World schools around the world.

Following the submission of the Application for Candidacy form, we can obtain the advice of the IB office for the Asia Pacific region and from IB approved consultants.

VIII. Progress of introducing the IB DP at SSC

17. In which phase of the authorization process is SSC?

SSC submitted the Application for Candidacy on 28 March 2012 providing the IB with the following important information as required:
- General information on the College, our facilities and our community
- The work during the consideration phase for introducing the DP
- Preparation for the implementation of the Diploma Programme in terms of philosophy, organization, resources and support and curriculum
- Subjects proposal and sequencing
- Staffing and training records and plans
- Action plan for different aspects of the school to attain the standards of IB
- Proposed implementation budget
- Pledge of financial support for the implementation of the IB DP from the College Council

We shall spend the next two school years on taking actions in curriculum, assessment and resources to prepare ourselves for implementing the IB DP.

18. What preparation is SSC making to introduce the IB DP?

SSC has the full support of the Council to make the best possible preparation for implementing the IB DP. Following the submission of the Interested Schools Form to the IB in November 2008, the College started working towards the goal.

A. Gaining a thorough understanding of the programme

- Teacher attendance of IB training workshops started in January 2010. By May 2012, 8 teachers including the principal have taken part in IB workshops of different kinds and subjects. Plans are for at least 8 more teachers to be trained when suitable workshops are scheduled by the IB in the coming school year.
- Subject guides, exam papers and marking schemes have been ordered for teachers’ review, comment and suggestions, especially in comparison with the local curriculum mandated by the Hong Kong Education Bureau. The comparison also enables teachers to identify curricular and pedagogical adjustments that will be helpful to students.
- A presentation was given in June 2010 to all the staff by Mr. Laurie Ince, former DP Manager of the Asia-Pacific Region.
- Six visits were organized to local IB DP schools for teachers to observe practices of the programme.
Specialized staff for IB preparation was hired to assist the College to do the preparation work.

B. Recruitment of the IB DP Coordinator

The IB Coordinator is instrumental to the solid preparation and successful implementation of the programme. Following local and international recruitment efforts, Mr. Derek Barham from the UK was appointed in February and will take up the post in September 2012. With over twenty years of teaching experience in Economics and Business & Management (the second being the subject he will teach at St Stephen’s), Mr. Barham has also served as an IB DP coordinator for a number of years. Before the Diploma Programme starts, Mr. Barham will teach Integrated Humanities in junior Secondary, thus facilitating helpful curricular adaptations.

C. Plans to introduce IB elements

We are introducing investigative skills to strengthen students’ inquiry learning, especially in S1, which will be helpful to the study of DSE or IB DP.

IX. Information and counseling for parents and students

19. Will there be counseling for parents and students in making choices about the curriculum and subjects in S5 and S6?

From the school year 2012/13 onwards, the College will arrange talks for parents and students to have a deeper understanding of the IB DP and the subject choices. Dates will be announced in due course.

Parents and students are welcome to contact Mr. Derek Barham, our IB DP Coordinator beginning 2012/13 school year for further information.