

March 15th, 2022

IB Diploma Programme 2022-2024 at SISS Secondary

Dear year 10 student and parent(s) or guardian,

Even though we are now allowed to hold an IB information meeting with parents I am aware that not everyone who wants to attend will be able to attend due to the ongoing pandemic situation. Therefore, I would like to inform everyone with this letter – not only those who will be present in today's meeting at school – about the most important topics related to our IB diploma programme here at SISS Secondary. Last week, Year 10a and 10b already met with me in school to discuss everything that they need to know if they decide to continue with the IB DP in 2022-2024.

Even if you attend today, please read the information provided here carefully to help your child in their decision-making for the right subjects and the corresponding levels.

Furthermore, you may want to go to our website <https://schuldorf.de/siss2> to find out more about the IB DP including tonight's presentation and the subject course form sheet for next semester. These can be found in the download section in the IB folder.

What kind of student is a good candidate for the IB Diploma Programme?

- The DP is a rigorous course of study for motivated students
- Prior academic success is less an indicator of ability to earn the diploma than are a student's determination to do his or her best
- Willingness to be organized in order to complete the work while leading a full, balanced life
- Strong commitment to learning in and beyond the classroom
- A student who attends lessons regularly! According to the Hessian School Law a student can be expelled from school if missing too many days unexcused.

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Before making subject choices

As a start: What should the student consider when making their subject choices?

- What would you like to study at university?
- What are university entrance requirements?
- What are your areas of interest and what are you good at?
- Ask for your teachers' advice.

Important information about possible subject choices

For the IB Diploma, a student must **choose six subjects, one from group 1 to 5 each¹**. Students who do not wish to take Visual Arts as their sixth subject must choose an additional subject from groups 1-4. However, a student must not choose German A and German B together.

Three subjects must be chosen **at Higher Level, three at Standard Level**. We highly advise students to have at least a grade 2 (or at least an A on their IGCSE mock exams) in the subjects they intend to study at higher level.

It is possible for an IB student at SISS to **take both languages, English and German, as a group 1 subject, i.e. as Language A Language & Literature courses, in order to receive the IB bilingual diploma**. Such a student need not take another group 2 subject. If they wish to take a 3rd language, this must be in place of the group 6 subject Visual Arts.

If a student is mastering most of the objectives of the Language B German syllabus of the IB DP, this student must opt for **Language A German** (if German is chosen). The final decision of a student choosing **Language B German** will be made by the subject teacher and administration: a student that is "overqualified" for German as a foreign language (Language B German) must either take German A Language & Literature or choose **Spanish B or French B**.

Additionally, all IB students must do the **Core of the IB: two lessons per week in Theory of Knowledge (TOK), write an EE (extended essay) and fulfil the requirements for CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service)**.

Furthermore, we need to point out that **we cannot accept or offer any online courses**, e.g. from Pamoja. Moreover, the **combination of Physics and Biology** is not possible.

¹ An overview of possible subject courses can be found on the presentation and the course choice form sheet.

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Two years ago, we have successfully introduced **Global Politics**, both as an SL and HL course, to our school IB syllabus which can be studied without any pre-knowledge. It is planned to also offer **Geography and History** alongside as a group 3 subject.

Finally, a student may choose a subject from the list that they have not had as an IGCSE subject. E.g. a student who is not taking the History IGCSE exams can still take History for the IB DP.

PE is an additional subject required by German law and does not count as one of the chosen six subjects.

Online registration for provisional course choices

The first round of choosing courses is provisional and will be done online. A link and password will be provided in due time. The deadline to complete registration is Wednesday, March 23rd, at 6 PM.

Missing this deadline could result in the student not getting all their preferred subject choices!

Courses offered depending on availability

Please note: the subjects on offer are provisional! While we will try to meet the interests of every student, we cannot always guarantee a course, depending on our school's resources (size of a class, teacher's availability, teaching hours etc.).

The preliminary choice you make is non-binding, however, it should be as realistic as possible as the Schuldorf-Bergstraße administration needs the respective numbers of students per course to plan the next school year as precisely as possible.

Studying in Germany

For students wishing to study in Germany: In order to enrol at a German university, you must have two languages of which, here at SISS, one has to be English A Language and Literature. Additionally, choose History, Geography or Global Politics in group 3, one of the three experimental sciences from group 4 (Physics, Biology or Chemistry), and one of the three course choices for Mathematics. Among the 3 HL subjects, you must select either mathematics or an experimental science at higher level! The general German recognition agreement of the IB diploma from the German Education Ministers' Conference (KMK), called the "Vereinbarung über die Anerkennung des International Baccalaureate Diploma": (Beschluss der Kultusministerkonferenz vom 10.03.1986 i. d. F. vom 26.11.2020), does not explicitly state the need to take German as a second language. However, it is advisable to take at least German B Higher Level as a second language in order to be better prepared for university and the possibility of having to write an additional entrance test (TestDAF or DSH) for German universities. We need to point out that even students with German A are sometimes still required to pass such a test depending on the university.

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German recognition of the IB diploma

Another important step towards the **German recognition of IB diploma** was taken in 2020 when SBS SISS Secondary signed a special agreement with the IBO to allow German Abitur equivalency recognition of our IB Mathematics SL courses. This involves that **ALL students choosing any of the two maths SL courses will have to study one extra module (vectors) in addition to the IB syllabus. This allows all (!) students to study also mathematical-scientific-technical subjects without further testing at university!**

As a result, the German Education Ministers' Conference (KMK) has provided confirmation that **IB diplomas which include a DP mathematics course at standard level (SL) can be recognized as the "allgemeine Hochschulzugangsberechtigung" (general university entrance qualification) equivalent to the German Abitur.**

Final Course Choices

Once the Schuldorf Administration has made a decision about the availability of courses, I will inform and ask you to make your final choices, again online.

Final thoughts

What should I do if I know that I will not continue here at SISS Secondary for the IB DP?

In this case it is important to already inform the IB coordinator and the school about your decision. Sometimes families inform the school too late about leaving which could result in extra costs of school fees.

What should I do if I have not decided yet to continue with the IB DP?

In this case it is advisable to register online for next year's IB programme to be on the safe side.

What should I do if I feel that one of my subjects or level of a course is not the best?

The first step should always be talking to your subject course teacher. Often enough, students want to change levels or courses on impulse rather than on what they are capable of. Stepping up to Year 11 IB level is challenging for every student. Sometimes, it simply takes time to get used to the tempo, content and teaching methods of a new IB teacher.

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What can I do if I realize that I made a wrong course choice or a mistake in the level of a course?

In such a case, the student and parent will have to contact the IB Coordinator in writing (by e-mail or letter) and “**request a change of subject/level**”. Such requests for change cannot always be supported as there could be circumstances prohibiting such a change, e.g. if a course is already full, or a course is getting too small etc. The school administration makes a final decision.

What is the deadline for requesting a change of course or level?

Such a **request has to be stated before autumn break 2022** in order to guarantee continuity in teaching, learning and studying. Therefore, discuss the student’s subject choices very carefully at home before registering online.

How do I qualify for the IB DP?

This information can be found on the presentation in detail.

I hope this information is useful in answering as many questions as possible. We are looking forward to seeing as many of you in the IB diploma programme starting September 2022!

Yours sincerely

Wolfgang Scheuerpflug
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Schuldorf Bergstraße

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