

# International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme Subject Brief

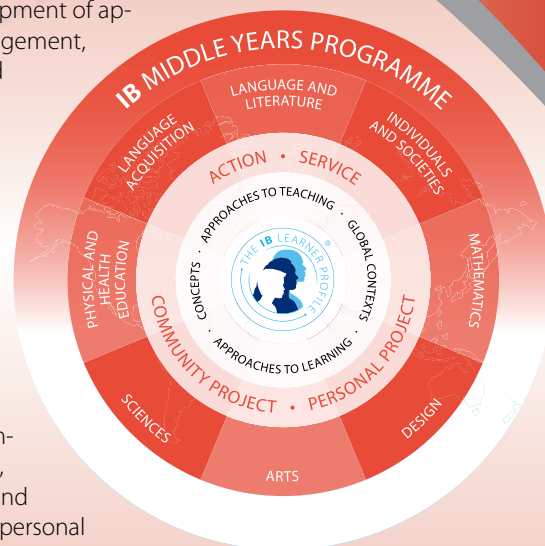
## Individuals and societies

From 2014

The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) is designed for students aged 11 to 16. It provides a framework of learning that emphasizes intellectual challenge and encourages connections between studies in traditional subjects and the real world. The MYP focuses on “learning how to learn” through the systematic development of approaches to learning (ATL) skills for communication, collaboration, organization, self-management, reflection, research, informational literacy, media literacy, creative and critical thinking, and transfer of learning. It also fosters intercultural understanding and global engagement—essential qualities for young people today.

Interdisciplinary teaching and learning builds a connected curriculum that addresses the developmental needs of students and prepares them for further academic study and life in an increasingly interconnected world. The MYP uses concepts and contexts as starting points for meaningful integration and transfer of knowledge across eight subject groups.

For students seeking a formal qualification at the end of the programme’s Year 5, the IB offers eAssessments that lead to the IB MYP certificate or course results for individual subject areas. To earn the MYP certificate, students must complete 2 hour on-screen examinations in each of the following: language and literature, individuals and society, sciences, mathematics and interdisciplinary learning; submit an ePortfolio in language acquisition and one of the following: design, arts or physical and health education; complete a moderated personal project; and complete school-based expectations for service as action (community service).



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## I. Course description and aims

The MYP individuals and societies subject group incorporates disciplines traditionally studied under humanities and social sciences. This subject group encourages learners to respect and understand the world around them, and equips them with the necessary skills to inquire into historical, geographical, political, social, economic, and cultural factors that affect individuals, societies and environments.

The study of individuals and societies helps students to appreciate critically the diversity of human culture, attitudes and beliefs. Courses in this subject group are important for helping students to recognize that both content and methodology can be debatable and controversial, and for practising the tolerance of uncertainty.

The IB’s approach to this subject area includes a strong focus on inquiry and investigation. Students collect, describe and analyse data; test hypotheses; and learn how to interpret increasingly complex information, including original source material. This focus on real-world examples, research and analysis is an essential aspect of the subject group.

The aims of MYP individuals and societies are to encourage and enable students to:

- appreciate human and environmental commonalities and diversity
- understand the interactions and interdependence of individuals, societies and the environment
- understand how both environmental and human systems operate and evolve
- identify and develop concern for the well-being of human communities and the natural environment

- act as responsible citizens of local and global communities
- develop inquiry skills that lead towards conceptual understandings of the relationships between individuals, societies and the environments in which they live.

## II. Curriculum overview

For MYP individuals and societies, schools develop courses in integrated humanities, history, economics, geography, philosophy, sociology/ anthropology, business management, psychology, and world religions.

The MYP promotes **inquiry** in these subjects by developing **conceptual understanding** within **global contexts**.

**Key concepts** such as *change, global interactions, time, place and space, and systems* broadly frame the MYP curriculum.

**Related concepts** promote deeper learning grounded in specific disciplines. Examples of related concepts in MYP individual and societies include *causality, globalization, culture and sustainability*.

Students explore key and related concepts through MYP **global contexts**.

- Identities and relationships
- Orientation in space and time
- Personal and cultural expression
- Scientific and technical innovation
- Globalization and sustainability
- Fairness and development

The MYP curriculum framework offers schools flexibility to determine

engaging, relevant, challenging and significant content that meets local and national curriculum requirements. This inquiry-based curriculum explores factual, conceptual and debatable questions in the study of individuals and societies.

The MYP requires at least 50 hours of teaching time for each subject area in each year of the programme. For students participating in MYP eAssessment, the IB recommends 70 hours of guided learning each year in MYP years 4 and 5.

### III. Assessment criteria

Each individuals and societies objective corresponds to one of four equally weighted assessment criteria. Each criterion has eight possible achievement levels (1–8), divided into four bands with unique descriptors that teachers use to make judgments about students' work.

#### Criterion A: Knowing and understanding

*Students develop factual and conceptual knowledge about individuals and societies.*

#### Criterion B: Investigating

*Students develop systematic research skills and processes associated with disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Students develop successful strategies for investigating independently and in collaboration with others.*

#### Criterion C: Communicating

*Students develop skills to organize, document and communicate their learning using a variety of media and presentation formats.*

#### Criterion D: Thinking critically

*Students use critical-thinking skills to develop and apply their understanding of individuals and societies and the process of investigation.*

### IV. MYP eAssessment

Students seeking IB MYP course results or the IB MYP certificate must demonstrate their achievement of the subject group's objectives by completing an end-of-course on-screen examination. On-screen examinations are formal external examinations, and are available in **history**, **geography** and **integrated humanities**.

Topics explored in MYP individuals and societies on-screen examinations include:

- demographics and human movements
- settlement and urban morphology
- superpowers, empires, and supra-national alliances and organizations
- significant individuals
- warfare and peacekeeping
- rights and social protest
- trade, aid and exchange
- economic agents and their interests and role in the economy: consumers, producers, governments, banks
- measurements and trends
- ecological relationships
- industrialization and technological developments.

Examination blueprints define the structure of tasks that simulate, repli-

cate and sample formative internal assessments. In MYP individuals and societies courses, on-screen examinations comprise three tasks.

| Task                    | Assessment criteria                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Marks |
|-------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| Engagement with sources | Assesses students' ability to use sources to: identify key ideas/points; find contradictory evidence; find a counterclaim; and identify the origin, purpose, value and limitations to compare and contrast or evaluate values and limitations of sources. (Criteria A and D) | 30    |
| Investigation           | Assesses students' ability to use a variety of sources to respond to structured questions. (Criteria B and C)                                                                                                                                                                | 30    |
| Extended response       | Assesses students' ability to engage in the activity of producing a piece of extended writing or communicating creatively. (Criteria A, B, C and D)                                                                                                                          | 60    |

MYP individuals and societies on-screen examinations are aligned with understanding and skills that prepare students for high levels of achievement in IB Diploma Programme courses in **individuals and societies**.

### Sample question (from history eAssessment)

The following questions relate to a range of written and rich media stimulus material:

- paragraph from a scholarly study of war and human conflict
- excerpt from a speech by a political leader in World War II (1943)
- graphical analysis of the causes of civil war in Liberia published by an international NGO (1989–2003)
- photograph of a cemetery from World War I
- internet encyclopedia entry on the US Civil War (1861–1865)

- Using these sources, **identify** two causes and three consequences of conflict.
- **Outline** the purpose, values and limitations for sources (i) and (ii).
- "Individual people are the main cause of wars and conflicts." **To what extent** do you agree with this claim? Answer with reference to sources (i)–(v), as well as with reference to the conflicts you have studied in MYP history.

About the IB: For over 45 years, the IB has built a reputation for high-quality, challenging programmes of education that develop internationally minded young people who are well prepared for the challenges of life in the 21st century and are able to contribute to creating a better, more peaceful world.

For further information on the IB Middle Years Programme, and a complete list of MYP subject briefs, visit: [www.ibo.org/myp/](http://www.ibo.org/myp/).

Complete subject guides can be accessed through the IB online curriculum centre (OCC) or purchased through the IB store: <http://store.ibo.org>.