

**Provision of the
International Baccalaureate Diploma Program
in Victorian Government Schools**

Guidelines

Amended
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Contents

1. Introduction
2. Approval to offer the IB Diploma
3. Principles for the delivery of the IB Diploma in Victorian government schools
4. Key approval criteria
5. The DEECD application process

Appendix A: *Operational Requirements for the Delivery of the IB Diploma*

I. INTRODUCTION

The **International Baccalaureate Organization** (IBO), based in Geneva, is a non-profit educational foundation and a provider of international education at the school level. It offers three levels of education program: **Primary Years Program (PYP)**, **Middle Years Program (MYP)** and the **Diploma Program**. All three levels of the IB program are offered across Australia, mostly in non-government schools. Information about the International Baccalaureate programs in Australia is available on the IBO website at: <http://www.ibo.org>.

Government schools seeking to offer the Primary Years Program and/or the Middle Years Program must obtain approval from DEECD prior to seeking authorisation from the IBO. Information including application details is available in the *Guidelines for the Provision of Specialised Curriculum Approaches in Years P-10 in Victorian Government Schools* available at: <http://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/edulibrary/public/curricman/policy/specialisedcurriculumapproaches-qdl.pdf>

The Diploma Program is a two-year senior certificate qualifying for university admission was accredited in 2006 by the then Victorian Qualifications Authority (VQA) as a Victorian senior secondary certificate of education and approved by the then Minister for Education for delivery in approved government schools.

The **IB Diploma** offers a broad curriculum. Students study their first language, a second language, mathematics, science, humanities and arts, *Theory of Knowledge*, and complete 150 hours of community service, sports activities and a creative pursuit. The IB Diploma program does not include Vocational Education and Training (VET) in its options, nor does it offer block credit for VET qualifications or units.

The **IB Diploma** is designed for students with university pathways in mind. Students who qualify for the IB Diploma are issued with a notional Equivalent National Tertiary Entrance Rank (ENTER) by the Victorian Tertiary Admission Centre (VTAC). A notional ENTER is a rank calculated by VTAC and used to directly compare the results of applicants who have studied under different Australian educational systems. The IB Diploma ENTER score is accepted by universities in Australia (overseas universities use the IB Diploma exam results in their admission process).

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (DEECD) has developed guidelines for the approval and delivery of the IB Diploma in government schools to ensure the integrity and viability of senior secondary certificate programs offered in the public education sector. The **Guidelines** include key principles and criteria for DEECD approval, the application process, and key operational requirements for program delivery.

II. APPROVAL TO OFFER THE IB DIPLOMA

The following Guidelines for approval and delivery of the IB Diploma program are applicable to Victorian government schools only.

Victorian government secondary schools wishing to deliver the IB Diploma need to obtain approval from DEECD prior to seeking authorisation from the IBO. However, as the IBO authorisation process, preparation and staff training take on average *twenty-four months*,

Victorian government schools need to familiarise themselves with the IBO requirements prior to applying to DEECD. This information can be accessed on the IBO website at <http://www.ibo.org/ibap/diploma/>.

A government school should not advertise or otherwise imply that it is authorised to offer the IB Diploma unless, and until such time as the school receives notification of approval from DEECD and authorisation to offer the IB Diploma from the IBO.

III. PRINCIPLES FOR THE DELIVERY OF THE IB DIPLOMA IN VICTORIAN GOVERNMENT SCHOOLS

1. The IB Diploma will be used where there are specific student needs not met by existing senior secondary certificates. Approvals will be limited and granted only in cases of clearly established need and where schools are already performing well, including having strong VCE and VCAL results.
2. Maintained access of students to other senior programs as well as to the IB Diploma is a priority.
3. Charges to students will be consistent with Victorian Government policy, and access for local students will be assured.
4. The quality of both IB Diploma programs and other programs delivered at a school will be assured. A school must be able to maintain the diversity and quality of its VCE and VCAL provision once the IB Diploma is introduced.
5. A major consideration will be the integration of the IB Diploma Program with the school's culture and values, as well as with the mainstream programs and activities, including student support.

IV. KEY APPROVAL CRITERIA

1. Demonstrated capacity to effectively deliver senior secondary certificate programs

The school's demonstrated capacity to effectively deliver senior secondary certificate programs, with broad subject offerings, sufficient enrolments to ensure diversity of provision and good VCE/VCAL outcomes will be the key criterion in the IB Diploma approval process.

Delivery of the IB Diploma in addition to current senior school certificates will involve an additional level of administrative and instructional complexity for the school. An applicant school needs to demonstrate high levels of achievement in VCE/VCAL results, comparable to other schools with a similar demographic profile, for example with a similar Student Family Occupation (SFO) index. The *allstudy mean score* data available in School Level Reports may be used to support this criterion.

The combined number of Year 11 and Year 12 enrolments on the Victorian Assessment Software System (VASS) database at the time of application would normally be expected to be 250 or more. (The size of the Years 11 and 12 cohorts will be assessed in the context of the school's overall performance).

2. The rationale for the IB Diploma

The school needs to present a **business case** identifying the need for the IB Diploma based on market research, community consultations, discussions with the Regional Director and analysis of the school's student achievement data. The questions to be addressed are:

1. Why does the school want to introduce the IB Diploma?
2. Will the school be able to integrate the IBO's philosophy in the school's strategic plan, mission and values, and approach to teaching and learning?
3. In what ways will the school's offering of the IB Diploma benefit the local community, including students and their parents?
4. In what ways will the implementation of the IB Diploma benefit the school?

3. Evidence of community support

Evidence of support from the school council, Regional Director, local community organisations, neighbouring schools and parents/parent bodies will be the core of this criterion.

Schools may use a range of strategies to introduce the IB Diploma proposal and seek support from stakeholders, such as:

- Setting up staff working parties to explore issues and to seek the support of the school community;
- Developing questionnaires to gain community feedback on the proposal;
- Information evenings for the post compulsory education stakeholders with guest speakers (IBO, teachers, program coordinators, parents and principals from schools already running an IB program); and
- Linking the IB Diploma proposal to previous/current education provision discussions at the local and regional levels.

The evidence should state clearly that local stakeholder support for the IB Diploma will extend over at least four years.

4. Demonstrated capacity to fund and deliver the IB Diploma

Applicants are required to undertake self-assessment against the IBO requirements for the provision of the IB Diploma in Victoria, including the costs (see <http://www.ibo.org/ibap/diploma/>) to ensure that the school will be able to meet them, prior to applying to DEECD.

As the introduction and running of the IB Diploma program incur significant costs, the school needs to demonstrate the capacity to fund and deliver the program over (at least) four years.

This part of the application is to be presented as a **Business Plan** including:

- **financial plan** (budget) with four-year projections based on the IBO fees and charges (see *Fee Structure in Asia Pacific* at <http://www.ibo.org/ibap/diploma/>), enrolment forecast, and any additional costs associated with the delivery of the IB Diploma, as well as an estimated income from international student fees over four years.
- **implementation plan** including the allocation of resources (see *Sample Implementation Plan* at <http://www.ibo.org/ibap/diploma/>). Issues to be addressed here include:
 - demand for the IB Diploma, including international student enrolment projection;
 - allocation of teaching and support staff;
 - need for upgrading existing resources such as library, language laboratory, IT laboratory (provide estimated cost);
 - professional development budget for IB Diploma teachers; and
 - unhindered capacity to support the existing programs.
- **marketing plan for the domestic and international markets** (if relevant).

5. Addressing the operational requirements for the delivery of the IB Diploma

Applicants need to indicate their willingness to comply with the ***Operational requirements for the delivery of the IB Diploma*** (Appendix A) addressing briefly the key points.

Applications that omit addressing these requirements will not be considered.

V. DEECD APPLICATION PROCESS

From 2007, there will be two IB Diploma application rounds per year: one commencing on 1 March and another commencing on 1 September.

A government school considering the introduction of the IB Diploma should follow the following process:

1. **Extensive consultation** with the school council, parent body, neighbouring schools and local community organisations on the need for the program in the area and the school's capacity to deliver it over a minimum of four years.
2. **Written *Expression of Interest to Regional Director*** (1-2 pages) outlining the proposal. The Regional Director will discuss the proposal with the school and make their recommendation (*within two weeks*) to the Group Coordination Division, Office for Government School Education (OGSE), on its merit.

Please note: To have their applications considered in a particular round, schools must lodge an expression of interest with their Regional Director before the commencement date indicated above.

3. **Full application to the Group Coordination Division** (*to be developed within four weeks from receiving the Regional Director's approval*) including:
 - a. School information
 - i. School name
 - ii. Contact details
 - iii. Number of students
 - iv. Teaching staff – number of full time and part time teachers
 - v. Average *teacher to student* ratio
 - vi. School facilities (IT lab, language lab, library etc)
 - vii. Currently offered programs in Years 11 and 12
 - viii. Whether or not the school offers or intends to offer other IB programs (if yes, specify)
 - ix. Whether or not the school has a cap on the number of international students and/or guaranteed number of places for Australian students in IB Diploma
 - a. Statement addressing Key Principles
 - b. Statement addressing Key Approval Criteria (including Business Plan)
 - c. Additional supporting documentation (if required).

4. **Four copies of the application to be sent via registered mail or a courier to:**

The Panel Chair
IB Diploma Evaluation Panel
Community and Stakeholder Relations Branch
Group Coordination Division
Office for Government School Education
Department of Education and Early Childhood Development
Level 1, 33 St Andrew's Place
East Melbourne VIC 3002

5. Application will be considered by the DEECD Evaluation Panel *within four weeks* of receipt.

6. The Evaluation Panel will submit its recommendation to the Deputy Secretary, Office for Government School Education, who will make a decision *within two weeks*.
7. The school will be advised of the outcome of their application in writing.
8. If successful, the school needs to apply to the IBO and go through the IBO authorisation process.
9. The successful applicant will be required to provide a copy of the IBO authorisation to the General Manager, Group Coordination Division, as soon as it has been granted.

Operational requirements for the delivery of the IB Diploma

Key operational requirements underpinning the delivery of the IB Diploma in government schools include: ***Program Delivery, Student Focus, Access*** and ***Quality Assurance***.

1. Program Delivery

The school will make a commitment to offer the IB Diploma for a minimum period of four years from the commencement of the program and will ensure that all students enrolled in the IB Diploma will be able to complete the program.

The school will continue to offer the Victorian Certificate of Education (VCE) alongside the IB Diploma as well as the Victorian Certificate of Applied Learning (VCAL) program if it offers it at the time of application.

If the school is forced to discontinue the IB Diploma before the end of a two year program, it will ensure that students enrolled in the program will have the option of transferring with credit to another school offering the IB Diploma or to the VCE program in the applicant school.

The resources required to run the IB Diploma program *must not* constrain the school's ability to offer an appropriate range of subject options within VCE and VCAL, including VET programs.

2. Student focus

The school will put in place an efficient and effective process through which to identify students whose needs will be better met by the IB Diploma program. Students wishing to discontinue the IB Diploma program will be able to transfer to the VCE with credit based on the completed IB Diploma subject at an appropriate time.

The school will develop a student support strategy including the monitoring of student workload, transition issues, student wellbeing and mentoring.

3. Access

Schools will not charge to parents any fees other than the examination fees and materials fees. The examination fees charged to parents must not exceed the IBO examination fees. DEECD will suspend or revoke the approval if additional fees are charged.

Schools may ask parents for voluntary contributions on top of the prescribed fees. All the fees associated with the delivery of the IB Diploma must be approved by the school council and parent bodies.

The requests for student materials charges and voluntary contributions must be made in accordance with the DEECD *Parent Payments in Victorian Government Schools* policy available at <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/management/schooloperations/schoolcharges.htm>.

Voluntary contributions should not exceed contributions made by parents towards the VCE program.

No local students can be denied access to the school's mainstream programs because of places being taken up by the IB Diploma students.

4. Quality Assurance

The school will register each Year 11 IB Diploma student with the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority (VCAA) through the VASS database by the due date (*to be determined by the VCAA each year*).

In addition, a government school approved to deliver the IB Diploma in Victoria will ensure:

- A dedicated coordination function at the school level;
- Effective curriculum planning processes;
- Availability of professional development program for IB Diploma teachers beyond the required IBO training program;
- Collection, monitoring and evaluation of comprehensive data on student engagement and wellbeing, achievement and transition from school;
- Development and fostering of an ongoing network of support in the local community, government, and parent bodies; and
- Development of good practice guidelines for the delivery of the IB Diploma.

The school will report to the Victorian Registration and Qualifications Authority (VRQA) any irregularities or issues related to IB Diploma delivery as soon as they arise.