International Baccalaureate
Diploma Programme Subject Brief

Theatre

First assessment 2024

The Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous pre-university course of study designed for students in the 16 to 19 age range. It is a broad-based two-year course that aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable and inquiring, but also caring and compassionate. There is a strong emphasis on encouraging students to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness, and the attitudes necessary for them to respect and evaluate a range of points of view.

The course is presented as six academic areas enclosing a central core. Students study two modern languages (or a modern language and a classical language), a humanities or social science subject, an experimental science, mathematics and one of the creative arts. Instead of an arts subject, students can choose two subjects from another area. It is this comprehensive range of subjects that makes the Diploma Programme a demanding course of study designed to prepare students effectively for university entrance. In each of the academic areas students have flexibility in making their choices, which means they can choose subjects that particularly interest them and that they may wish to study further at university.

Normally, three subjects (and not more than four) are taken at higher level (HL), and the others are taken at standard level (SL). The IB recommends 240 teaching hours for HL subjects and 150 hours for SL. Subjects at HL are studied in greater depth and breadth than at SL. In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, activity, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.

I. Course description and aims

The IB Diploma Programme theatre course is a multifaceted theatre-making course. It gives students the opportunity to make theatre as creators, designers, directors and performers. It emphasizes the importance of working both individually and as part of an ensemble. It offers the opportunity to engage actively in the creative process of inquiring, developing, presenting and evaluating. Students are encouraged to work as inquisitive and imaginative artists, transforming ideas into action and communicating these to an audience.

Theatre students learn to apply research and theory to inform and contextualize their work as they experience the course through practical and physical engagement. They understand that knowledge resides in the body and that research can be conducted physically through both action and practice. In this respect, the theatre course encourages students to appreciate that through the processes of researching, creating, preparing, presenting and critically reflecting on theatre—as participants and spectators—they gain a richer understanding of themselves, their community and the world.

Through the study of theatre, students strengthen their awareness of their own personal and cultural perspectives, developing an appreciation of the diversity of theatre practices, their processes and their modes of presentation. This enables students to discover and engage with different forms of theatre

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across time, place and culture and promotes international-mindedness. Participation in the DP theatre course results in the development of both theatre and life skills; the building of confidence, imagination, creativity and a collaborative mindset.

The aims of the DP arts subjects (dance, film, music, theatre, visual arts and literature and performance) are to enable students to:

1. explore the diversity of the arts across time, cultures and contexts
2. develop as imaginative and skilled creators and collaborators
3. express ideas creatively and with competence in forms appropriate to the artistic discipline
4. critically reflect on the process of creating and experiencing the arts
5. develop as informed, perceptive and analytical practitioners
6. enjoy lifelong engagement with the arts.

In addition, the aims of the theatre course at SL and HL are to enable students to:

7. inquire into theatre and its contexts
8. develop and practically apply theatre performance and production skills and elements, led by intentions
9. create, present and evaluate theatre work both independently and collaboratively
10. acquire the perspectives and intentions of an internationally-minded theatre-maker
11. understand, appreciate and explore the relationship between theory and performance (HL only).

II. Curriculum model overview

Syllabus component	Teaching hours	
	SL	HL
Staging play texts This area of the syllabus addresses the transformation of play texts into action. Students examine the ways in which ideas are articulated in texts by playwrights and the ways in which performance and production elements can be used to effectively fulfill theatre-maker intentions.	45	45
Exploring world theatre traditions This area of the syllabus addresses the authentic exploration of world theatre traditions through academic and practical research and exploration. Students inquire into and physically explore world theatre traditions, performance conventions and performance material from those traditions in order to acquire a deeper understanding and appreciation of the traditions through the body and/or voice.	45	45

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Collaboratively creating original theatre This area of the syllabus addresses the collaborative development and performance of original theatre as part of an ensemble of theatre-makers. Students formulate intentions for theatre-making and examine the ways in which these intentions can be effectively realized through the collaborative creation of original performance work inspired by a starting point.	60	60
Performing theatre theory (HL only) This area of the syllabus addresses the exploration of aspects of theatre theory and the ways in which theory can inform performance. Students research at least one theatre theorist, identify an aspect of their theory and apply this to create and present theatre work that demonstrates this aspect of theory in performance.	X	90
Total teaching hours	**150**	**240**

III. Assessment model

Having followed the theatre course at SL or HL, students will be expected to fulfill the following objectives at assessment.

1. **Inquiry**
    a. Carry out academic and physical research and identify valuable information and resources to support work in theatre
    b. Inquire into, and contextualize, the theatrical work and ideas of others
2. **Development**
    a. Develop informed and imaginative theatre-maker intentions for making and staging theatre
    b. Practically and collaboratively explore how performance and production elements combine in practice to create effective moments of theatre
3. **Presentation**
    a. Present theatre work to others in order to fulfill theatre-maker intentions
    b. Communicate theatrical ideas in a variety of forms, formats and contexts
4. **Evaluation**
    a. Reflect on feedback from others and consider their own development as theatre-makers
    b. Evaluate the effectiveness of theatre work.

Assessment at a glance

Assessment task	Assessment task details	SL	HL
	Internal		
Production proposal	Students at SL and HL choose a published play text they have not previously studied and formulate a vision for the design and theoretical staging of the entire play text for an audience. These ideas are presented in the form of a proposal. Each student submits the following. 1. A production proposal (a maximum of 12 pages of written text and images, with written text not exceeding 4,000 words) plus a list of all sources used.	30%	20%

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External			
Research presentation	Students at SL and HL plan, deliver and video record an individual research presentation (15 minutes maximum) in which they provide evidence of their academic and practical exploration and learning of a world theatre tradition they have not previously studied. Each student submits the following. 1. A video recording of the student's research presentation (15 minutes maximum). 2. A list of all sources cited and any additional resources used by the student during the presentation.	30%	20%
Collaborative project	Students at SL and HL collaboratively create and perform an original piece of theatre (lasting 7–10 minutes maximum) created from a starting point of their choice. The piece is presented to an audience as a fully-realized production. Each student submits the following. 1. A project report (a maximum of 10 pages of written text and images, with written text not exceeding 4,000 words) plus a list of all sources used. 2. A video recording of the final piece (7-10 minutes maximum).	40%	25%
Solo theatre piece (HL only)	Students at HL research a theatre theorist they have not previously studied, identify an aspect(s) of theory and create and present a solo theatre piece (lasting 4-7 minutes maximum) that demonstrates the practical application of this theory to a theatre piece for an audience. Each student submits the following. 1. A report (2,500 words maximum) plus a list of all primary and secondary sources cited. 2. A continuous unedited video recording of the whole solo theatre piece (4-7 minutes maximum).	X	35%

About the IB: For over 50 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 Diploma Programme, visit: **www.ibo.org/en/dp.**

Complete subject guides can be accessed through the programme resource centre or purchased through the IB store: **http://store.ibo.org.**

For more on how the DP prepares students for success at university, visit: **www.ibo.org/en/university-admission.**