



# TGS IB *in* PRACTICE

Issue 6: February 3, 2015

## Foreword

### Welcome to IB 2015 from Jackie Rodgers, Head of IB

A welcome to those new to the programme, those who have had their first year with us, to the staff at Takapuna Grammar School and the parents of International Baccalaureate students and to those who continue to show interest in the programme.

Firstly, I want to make mention of the success of our first cohort. A hundred percent pass rate and success in achieving grades in the forties. I continue to be both inspired and awed by the enormous courage and commitment our IB students have had in striving to become successful and independent learners. They took the 'road less travelled' and I believe are grateful for it. They came in unsure, some a little unwilling and all a little nervous. Each of them have left with confidence to pursue academic tertiary studies, a knowing smile and a gratefulness to the school for offering them the opportunity to participate in the IB programme.

Secondly, my mind turns to the support that these students have had from their caring, patient parents and dedicated, determined teaching staff, all who have been tireless in their endeavours to assist these students with their learning. Students, teachers, parents, I thank you. To the Board of Trustees, Simon Lamb and Terry Holding, I thank you too for your support, enthusiasm and passion.

There is a huge amount in store for this coming year. IB students will be involved with building the house on the front fields with the 'Habitat for Humanity' team; Year 12 IB students have the opportunity to attend the IB Student World Conference in New York; a student exchange to Hong Kong and 'Project Samoa' is getting underway as we look at supporting young Samoan students with improving their literacy.

I wish you and your families a most successful year ahead.

For more information on what the IB is all about, subject choices and more go to: [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org)

For information on what TGS has to offer check out the IB link under curriculum on the school website [www.takapuna.school.nz](http://www.takapuna.school.nz)

## Upcoming

### IB Student World Conference

IBWSC University of Rochester, Rochester, New York, USA August 2nd - 8th, 2015.

[Click here to email Mr. Smith for details](#)

### IB Year 1 Camp

20-22 April 2015

[Click here to email Ms. Cooke for details](#)

### Year 12 IB Student-Parent Evening

All parents and students of Year 12 IB are cordially invited to an information evening at 5:30 in the library, Monday 2nd March

### Big Habitat Build

March 10 - 28  
School field, TGS

## Global IB

### IB Parent Community

Parents are invited to join the IB parent community by signing up on the [Supporters Page](#) by simply providing their information and checking the "IB Parent" box. Members of the IB parent community can choose to receive information about IB in their region and what other parents are doing to help their students.



# My IB

## Some thoughts from the first graduating cohort



**Stas:**

When I started IB I was looking at becoming a Scientist or a Chemist because I was really into my Science at the time. I went into it with a one track mind about what I was going to do but during the course my interests started to change dramatically but in the end I decided to change my career direction in becoming a teacher, or something to do with History. I would have never got to that place without the all round nature of the IB. If I had done NCEA I would have just continued to follow that singular science route.

**Elaine:**

I'm really appreciative that I had the chance to take I.B. It's like stepping out of your comfort zone and I was doing many things I would never have imagined doing. Participating in scholarship exams and volunteering for CAS activities I thought would give me more work but I learnt it was important. I learnt school is important for developing more than academic skills. I am a better person for it.



**Harry:**

In Year 11 I didn't try very hard. I started IB to kick-start my learning and I worked hard. I gained a Scholarship in Physics and IB played a big part in that. I became Head boy, I won cycling races for the first time... so many good things. My life started going uphill. It's been a great experience and I'll have valuable memories for the rest of my life

**Lena:**

I chose to do IB because I thought it would help me motivate myself and I am really glad I made that decision. I feel a lot more prepared for University and it has taught me a lot about my work ethic and what I need to do to get the best results. It wasn't always easy but it was a supportive environment to be in.



**David:**

Before I did IB I was generally unmotivated at school. I didn't work particularly hard and only gained mediocre grades but then the challenge of IB, the all round aspects of the course across the Humanities, across the Sciences it challenged me in ways I didn't expect. In those 2 years my academic results and my experiences in other areas of the school went up and I think that is a credit to the IB programme.

## IB Research, July 2014

To support our students comments, research undertaken last year reported that:

When asked to rate the most valuable and challenging elements of their secondary education in relation to their preparation for college, Diploma Programme students specifically identified the following:

- Extended Essay: This project was identified for teaching skills such as finding relevant sources, determining the credibility of sources, organizing information, producing a coherent long-form paper and citing sources, skills found to be very useful in college, and which left DP students feeling more prepared to conduct research than many of their classmates.
- Language A: DP respondents cited their literature courses as helpful in preparing them to write quality essays, handle heavy reading loads, use academic sources and gain a level of comfort while presenting material in class.
- More than half of the DP respondents rated the entire Diploma Programme as 'most valuable' and 'challenging'.

[Read the full press release here.](#)



# 10 Things I like about the IB Programme

<http://blogs.ibo.org/blog/2015/01/30/ten-things-i-like-about-the-ib-diploma-programme/>

In 2013, Marissa Jansz a teacher in Singapore with experience in both the IB Diploma Programme (DP) and Cambridge 'A' levels shares "Ten things I like about the IB Diploma Programme."

**1. Its rigour:** The one common thing that all DP students and graduates will say is that it was tough and challenging. Interestingly, all DP teachers will unanimously echo these sentiments. The DP is an extremely rigorous programme, but it is purposeful hard work, and the skills one develops are lasting and useful. As a testimony to this, dozens of students have visited me after their first year in university telling me how they had found it a breeze because of the intensity with which they worked during their DP studies. It's an "exciting busy" that keeps you looking forward to each new stage.

**2. Its scope:** The six subject groups combined with the core components (CAS, TOK and EE) means that students are exposed to all the main academic streams and more. For me, this is very important. After all, how many 16- to 18-year-olds are certain about what they want to do with their lives? Even if they have some conviction at that stage, how many stick with that decision? So then, it seems prudent to let them experience the different academic possibilities available to them. There is always time to specialize and streamline.

**3. Its creation of a sense of ownership:** The structure and implementation of the DP is such that students have to take ownership of their learning. The term "independent learner" is used quite a lot in an IB classroom and perhaps may have lost some of its value because of its frequent usage. However, that is what doing the IB is all about—the student is at the centre of the process of learning, with the teacher as guide and facilitator.

**4. It encourages meaningful teacher-student rapport:** One of the most important things for me as a teacher is the rapport I have with my students. This is both a core value and strength. The DP has given me many opportunities to engage the students in in-depth and fruitful discussions, which are often carried beyond the classroom.

**5. Its learner profile:** According to the IB website, "The IB learner profile is the IB mission statement translated into a set of learning outcomes for the 21st century. The learner profile provides a long-term vision of education. It is a set of ideals that can inspire, motivate and focus the work of schools and teachers, uniting them in a common purpose." Accordingly, IB learners strive to be: inquirers, knowledgeable, thinkers, communicators, principled, open-minded, caring, risk-takers, balanced, reflective. As IB teachers, we too strive to be all these and work towards inculcating these values in our students. After all, what is education if it is not driven by values?

**6. Its openness to teacher input:** One of the things I have enjoyed doing for a new cohort is creating the text options. The syllabus is broad and flexible. This allows teachers to tap into their interests, expertise and academic specialisations. Effective classroom instruction hinges on a teacher's enthusiasm and conviction about the material being taught.

**7. Its multi-facetedness:** Just as the six subject groups allow for academic diversity, the inclusion of the CAS component means that students gain a holistic education. It is not possible to complete the diploma while ignoring the sporty, artsy and humane aspects of one's personality. The aim is laudable: to produce well-rounded individuals. I've found the CAS programme immensely beneficial to me as a teacher too. The community service projects I have overseen have enriched me as a person.

**8. Its relevance:** The Diploma Programme strives to provide an education that is relevant to the modern world. Given the rapidity of change this is not a very easy task. Yet, the efforts that have been/are being made are commendable. As a teacher of English I can speak confidently about my own subject and I have been impressed by the acknowledgement of multiple media as 'text'. Although this is just one tiny example, what it shows is that students are working within frameworks that are familiar to them and that they can identify with.

**9. Its international-ness:** Although there are many qualifications that bear the word 'international' in their title, very few of them actually reflect this in their syllabi. The IB however, having been created to cater to an itinerant community, has international-mindedness at the core of its courses. This involves an inclusion of divergent cultures, which means that a student has access to material from so many different parts of the world, creating in them a better sense of understanding and appreciation of difference.

**10. It's fun!** Yes, the Diploma Programme can be heaps of fun. Ok, so when the deadlines are imminent and the work piles up, perhaps it's not always easy to see the fun side of things. But, at the end of the day, most IB students and teachers will tell you how much fun it has been!





# IB Learner Profile

## Balance



It seems appropriate to select 'balance', one of the 10 Learner Profile attributes, to focus on at the start of a new year.

"We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives - intellectual, physical, and emotional - to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live." (<http://www.ibo.org/en/section-benefits/learner-profile/>)

Happiness is not a matter of intensity, but of balance, order, rhythm and harmony. Thomas Merton

## IB in Action



Service activities are part of the CAS (Creativity, Activity and Service) programme in IB. Here the students participate in the clean up of Muriwai.

For more information on CAS [click here](#).

## Habitat for Humanity A 'hand up' not a 'hand out'



Habitat for Humanity Auckland, Takapuna Grammar School, and Devonport Rotary are uniting to build a home in partnership with the Sakalia family, who are currently living in substandard housing in South Auckland.

The five bedroom home will be built in just 16 days on the Lake Rd frontage of Takapuna Grammar School's grounds and upon completion be transported to its permanent site in South Auckland.

The Big Habitat Build will take place between March 10 - 28, 2015, providing an opportunity for hundreds of students, businesses and local volunteers to participate in the home's fundraising, promotion, and construction. Our students at Takapuna Grammar will be volunteers on the site assisting where they are needed and participating in every aspect of the build. Watch as the build materialises before our eyes on the front school field.

## IB latest research

### IB students better prepared for University

New research conducted by Dr. David Conley and a team of researchers from the Education Policy Improvement Center (EPIC) compared two groups of university students—International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme alumni and non-Diploma Programme alumni. The findings suggest that IB Diploma Programme students are better able to cope with demanding workloads, better able to manage their time and better able to meet expectations placed on them.

As a group, the DP students reported deeper understanding of the structure of knowledge and large concepts and how content crosses over and connects disciplines. These common responses indicate that the DP students develop an appreciation for learning and skill in higher-order thinking that supports them as university students. [Read more](#).

