

The
International Baccalaureate
Diploma Programme

at

Rome International School

A guide for students and their families

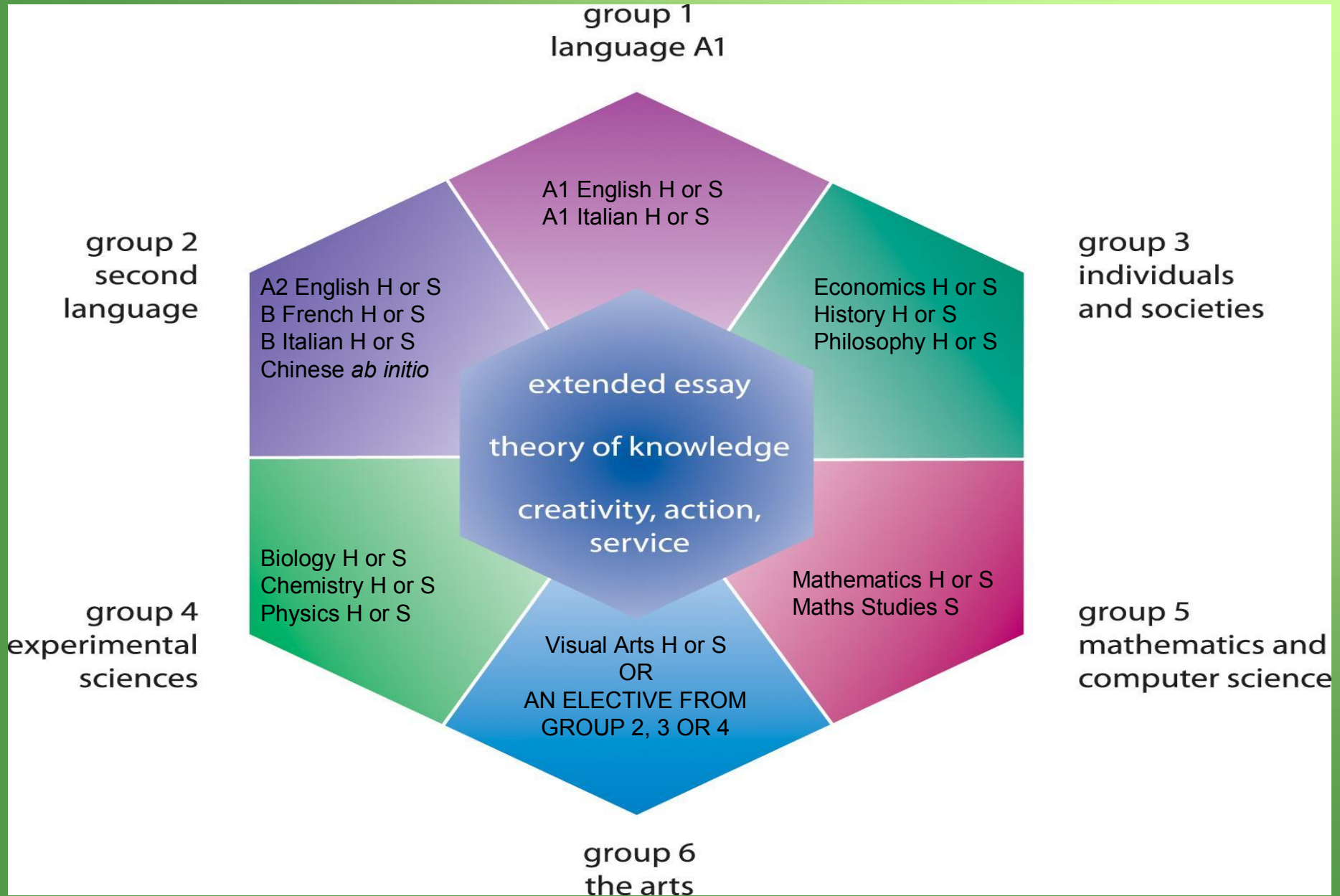


ABOUT THE IB DIPLOMA

- A two year pre-university course – followed during the final two years of High School (Grades 12 and 13 at RIS).
- Intended to be academically challenging, whilst developing the whole student.
- Hexagonal structure, with six subject groups around a central Core Component – Creativity, Action and Service, Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay.
- Three subjects studied at Higher Level (HL) – each 4 hours 30 minutes per week.
- Three subjects studied at Standard Level (SL) – each 3 hours per week.
- Students complete a variety of internally assessed written, oral and practical assignments over the two years and sit final written exams in May of the second year.
- Maximum points score is 45 (up to 7 points in each subject, plus up to 3 ‘bonus’ points for the Core Component). 24 needed to pass.



THE IB DIPLOMA AT RIS



CREATIVITY, ACTION, SERVICE (CAS)

The CAS component is central to the Diploma Programme as it encourages students to learn through and reflect upon their actions, and to make a contribution within a local and international context.

Students have to complete at least 150 hours spread evenly across the three areas, covering all of the eight CAS learning outcomes.

They will complete at least one project, involving team work, and incorporating at least two of the three areas, and produce a journal to reflect upon their whole CAS experience, which is supervised by the CAS Co-ordinator.

Students will have a two hour weekly CAS session within their timetable and are also expected to spend time out of school fulfilling their CAS requirements.

Successful completion of the CAS part of the Core Component is an essential requirement to pass the Diploma Programme.



THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE (TOK)

The study of Theory of Knowledge is a compulsory aspect of the Diploma Programme and one which places the student as the 'knower' at the centre of their own learning.

The course encourages students to reflect critically upon their own knowledge and its acquisition and significance. They should become more aware of the different ways of knowing and the areas of knowledge in the context of their own programme of study and the local, national and international community.

TOK is taught in a variety of ways, focusing on discussion and debate, with regular time-tabled classes and occasional TOK days.

The course is assessed through a written assignment and oral presentation and needs to be completed successfully in order for students to gain the Diploma.



EXTENDED ESSAY

The Extended Essay is an opportunity for students to undertake a more detailed piece of independent research and academic writing in a topic of their own choosing.

Students are paired with a teacher of a relevant subject, who will act as the Extended Essay Supervisor, offering one-to-one guidance and tutorials to oversee the essay.

The Extended Essay is started during the first year of the Diploma Programme and completed by December of the second year and is then externally assessed by the IBO.

Successful completion of the Extended Essay is a requirement to pass the Diploma. Up to three 'bonus' points can be gained from the work produced in the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge.



GROUP 1 – FIRST LANGUAGE

RIS students choose between the study of **English A1 (HL and SL)** or **Italian A1 (HL and SL)**. In some cases it may be possible for a student to study a different subject as a self-taught **Language A1 (SL only)**.

The A1 Language course is a stimulating and varied course in Literature, with fifteen authors studied at HL and eleven at SL, five of these to be 'World Literature' texts in translation.

The choice of texts is intended to give students an insight into a wide variety of literary genres and periods, with the combination of traditional texts from the 'literary canon' with some more contemporary works.

Students are assessed through a combination of final written exams (worth 50%), World Literature coursework (worth 20%) and an oral component consisting of a commentary and presentation (worth 30%).



GROUP 2 – SECOND LANGUAGE

In this group students take their second language as either **Language A2**, **Language B** or **Language *ab initio***.

English A2 (HL and SL) will be studied by our students with a high level of fluency in English, who take Italian as their A1 language, and is a stimulating course in literature and linguistic study, intended to complement the work done in Italian A1.

French / Italian B (HL and SL) language study is intended for students who are taking English as their A1 language and who have a good (HL) or reasonable (SL) standard of fluency. Language B places a high importance on being able to communicate effectively in a spoken and written manner and understanding the language within its social context.

Chinese *ab initio* (SL only) is intended for beginners or near-beginners and is a course which combines practical language skills with a study of the cultural context.

Students are assessed through a combination of final exams and oral presentations, with additional written coursework in English A2



GROUP 3 – INDIVIDUALS & SOCIETIES

At RIS we offer a choice of three subjects in this group:

Economics (HL and SL) is the study of the application of economic theories and methodologies to real-world examples, looking closely at the concepts of scarcity and resource allocation. Students are encouraged to formulate questions, hypotheses and conclusions about economies.

History (HL and SL) focuses on the recording, reconstructing and interpretation of the past through the investigation of a variety of sources. It is a discipline that gives students an understanding of themselves in relation to the world, both past and present, through posing exploratory questions and looking at primary sources and the work of historians.

Philosophy (HL and SL) deals with issues that are profound, complex, challenging and important for humanity. The focus is on critical and systematic thinking, careful analysis of arguments, the study of philosophical themes and a close reading of texts.



GROUP 4 – EXPERIMENTAL SCIENCES

At RIS we offer a choice of three subjects in this group:

Biology (HL and SL) specifically aims to increase and foster an interest in biological phenomena. Four main biological concepts will be highlighted in all the topics studied in this course: the link between form and function; universality vs. diversity; the importance of maintaining equilibrium within systems; evolution.

Chemistry (HL and SL) studies the structures and properties of organic and inorganic matter, helping students to understand many biological and natural processes, through practical experimentation to develop laboratory skills.

Physics (HL and SL) is the most fundamental of the three sciences as it seeks to describe the material universe itself at macro level (the universe) and micro level (fundamental particles). It involves both the study of theory and practical lab work. The IB Physics course seeks to develop traditional practical skills (mainly applied in the area of Newtonian physics) as well as the use of Mathematics, which is the 'language' of Physics. Physics HL is a compulsory requirement for *Maturita Scientifica* equivalence.

All three Science subjects are assessed through a combination of final written exams, practical work and a Group 4 inter-disciplinary project.



GROUP 5 -MATHEMATICS

On the RIS Diploma Programme we offer Mathematics at three different levels.

Mathematics HL is suited to students who have a high level of ability in the subject and require an excellent grounding in mathematics for their future career, for example engineering. For students wanting Italian *Maturita Scientifica* equivalence Mathematics HL is compulsory.

Mathematics SL is suited to students who have a good level of ability and may need to take the subject in enough depth to complement their study of Science or Economics, for example.

Mathematical Studies (SL only) is intended for students who have less ability in the subject and is designed to be more accessible and relevant to everyday life.

Assessment in all three courses is through a combination of final exams (worth 80%) and project work (worth 20%).



GROUP 6 – ARTS AND ELECTIVES

In Group 6 students can either take Visual Arts or a second subject from Group 2, 3 or 4, giving them the opportunity to tailor their Diploma Programme to their own specialism and interests and conform to the requirements of Italian state validation, if this is needed.

Visual Arts (HL or SL) is intended for students who wish to refine their skills in the processes of designing and making art, whilst developing their ability to respond to and analyse critically the function, meaning and artistic qualities of past, present and emerging art. Students will study the work of other artists from cultures around the world in order to inspire new direction in their own work and to reflect upon themselves as artists in an international context. Our students will follow the course option A, which has a ratio of 60% studio work to 40% investigation work book.



IB DIPLOMA ITALIAN VALIDATION

Since 1986, the IB Diploma has been recognised in Italy under the following conditions:

- the school needs to be authorised by the IBO;
- equivalence to the *Maturità Scientifica* is granted to IB Diploma students with the following subjects (included in the RIS offer):

Group 1: Language A1 HL or SL

Group 2: Language A2 or B or *ab initio* SL

Group 3: History or Economics or Philosophy SL

Group 4: Physics HL

Group 5: Mathematics HL

Group 6: Chemistry or Biology or Visual Arts HL or SL

- equivalence to the *Maturità Linguistica* is granted to IB Diploma students with the following subjects (included in the RIS offer):

Group 1: Language A1 HL

Group 2: Language A2 or B HL

Group 3: History or Economics or Philosophy HL or SL

Group 4: Chemistry or Physics or Biology SL

Group 5: Mathematics SL or Mathematical Studies SL

Group 6: Third Language HL or SL or *ab initio* SL

For access to Italian universities, the Language A1 must be Italian.



THE IB DIPLOMA SCHOOL DAY

In order to maximise available facilities and give Diploma students an increased sense of independence, we will be operating a staggered school day from September 2009.

Each student will have their own individual timetable with approximately 3 hours per week of independent study time.

The timing of the school day will vary, with lessons scheduled between 8.50 and 16.50, although all students will have some days where they start later or finish earlier.

Lessons will be of varying lengths, from 60 to 90 minutes, depending on the subject requirements.

Students will be registered at the start of each lesson, so that attendance can be carefully monitored.



THE PASTORAL SYSTEM AT RIS

IB Diploma students will have a personal tutor who will monitor their progress during a weekly form time. The tutor will work together with the Principal, Vice-Principal, Diploma Co-ordinator and other subject teachers to ensure that our students are supported in both their academic and personal development.

Work in the Core Component will be supported by the Creativity, Action, Service Co-ordinator, Theory of Knowledge Co-ordinator and Extended Essay Supervisor.

All students will be given extensive guidance in choices relating to the selection of university courses and institutions and future careers.

In addition to this support, professional counsellors are available in school by appointment, should students wish to talk to someone in confidence about personal matters.



IB DIPLOMA FACILITIES

- New purpose-built Science laboratory, operational since September 2008, fully equipped to meet the requirements for all Group 4 Science subjects.
- New library (5th Floor), open from April 2009, with an extensive range of IB Diploma resource materials, such as books, periodicals and DVDs, staffed by a full-time IB Diploma trained librarian.
- New self-study centre within the Library, where students have access to computers and research advice from the Librarian.
- New High School student 'common room' area is planned.
- IB Diploma classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards and students have regular access to computers when these are required within lessons.



For any further information about the
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