

Choosing your IB Diploma subjects for international university applications

If you are likely to apply to study at university outside of Sweden you need to give careful consideration to the diploma subjects you choose.

General Information

1. Applying to universities around the world in general

The IB Diploma is widely recognized. Read more on the IB web site at:
www.ibo.org/en/university-admission/recognition

2. Applying to UK universities

The IB Diploma is recognized and accepted by all universities and generally no additional tests are needed. Entry requirement tests still apply for courses in Medicine (either the UKCAT or the BMAT test, search online for more information about these tests) and for many Law programs (the LNAT test, for more information, search online). Note that these tests are required by UK applicants as well.

The UK system involves early specialization, thus subject choice in the IB Diploma is very important for acceptance on many degree courses.

3. Applying for degree courses in the USA

In general, students specialize at a later date in their degree courses. Students take a variety of subjects at the start and then specialize or “major” later in the course. As a result of this it is less important which Higher Level IB subjects you take. Still, if you would like to study Economics/Business courses as a major, you will often get credits if you have already taken IB Economics. Also, as a foundation for a major in languages or science, you should try to take Higher Level subjects in these areas at IB in order to be better prepared for the degree course.

The IB Diploma is widely recognized but most North American colleges and universities also require SAT (Scholastic Aptitude Test) or ACT (American College Testing) results. SAT is a scholastic assessment test measuring a student’s ability to reason verbally and mathematically. ACT is a test of the same kind as SAT. Also, universities may ask for a SAT SUBJECT test applicable to the chosen course of study. Moreover, some universities prefer applicants to sit the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) as well, yet this usually does not apply to IB graduates.

The earlier you begin preparing for these tests, the better results you are likely to achieve. Visit collegeboard.com for more information on the SAT, and www.actstudent.org/ for the ACT, and - possibly - www.ets.org (TOEFL)

Extra-curricular activities

Universities abroad pay close attention to the extra-curricular activities of applicants. It is important that you show your involvement in the community and that you are engaged in activities ranging from fund-raising to tutoring younger students, from playing an instrument to coaching a team. Many IB students have benefited from the CAS program, which begins in IB2, in this respect.

If you are applying for Medicine or Veterinary Science, it is essential that you have clinical experience. Working extra hours at a nursing home and shadowing nurses and physicians at a hospital are examples of such experience.

Remember!

Choose subjects which interest you and in which you are likely to excel. Your pre-IB studies so far should have given you at least an indication of this.

Subject Specific Information

It is a good idea to research which higher level subjects are needed to be eligible for some popular degree courses at UK universities.

The most comprehensive source of information is the UCAS web site (ucas.com), which lists the entry requirements for a particular course.

- Use the search function and enter the name of the course (such as Economics). Select Undergraduate. You will now find a long list of every university offering the Economics course. (Note: in the menu to the left, you can limit your search to specific universities.)
- Looking at the list of course providers, click on courses that interest you. Read more about the course. Here you can also check *Entry Requirements* in the menu to the left. Remember to scroll down to find *International Baccalaureate*. Stated here are the total Diploma points needed and often which Higher Level subjects and grades that are required for each course.

NOTE: If you aim to study Medicine in the UK, read/watch more by visiting the homepage of *The Medical Schools Council in the UK*.