



THE AMERICAN SCHOOL IN SWITZERLAND

Applying to be an International Baccalaureate student at TASIS

The International Baccalaureate Program at TASIS

The IB Organization describes its program as a comprehensive and rigorous two-year curriculum leading to examinations for students aged between sixteen and nineteen. Based on the pattern of no single country, it is a deliberate compromise between the specialization required in some national systems and the breadth preferred in others. The general objectives of the IB are to provide students with a balanced education, to facilitate geographic and cultural mobility, and to promote international understanding through a shared academic experience.

In 1996, TASIS began offering students the opportunity to take examinations in the IB program, leading to the full IB Diploma or individual Certificates. Students choose six academic subjects, three of which must be at Higher Level and three at Standard Level. Each of the six subjects is marked on a scale of 1 (minimum) to 7 (maximum), and, in general, the award of the Diploma requires a minimum total of 24 points plus the satisfactory completion of an Extended Essay, a course entitled Theory of Knowledge (TOK), and participation in Creativity Action Service (CAS). Three extra points can be obtained from a combination of the TOK essay and the Extended Essay. The maximum score for an IB Diploma is 45 points. There are special conditions which allow students to fail a course but still obtain an IB Diploma. More information on all aspects of the IB can be found at <http://www.ibo.org/>

Who should apply to be an IB student at TASIS?

There are two groups of students, to some extent overlapping each other, who should pursue the IB Diploma: those who need it for entrance to the universities of their choice and those, both academically able and motivated, who want to undertake a challenging course of study. While students are expected to be in good academic standing (both academic and effort grades) before starting and during the IB program, students with lower grades can, and do, gain much from studying the IB Diploma. They must, however, be willing to work hard, and be able to organize their time effectively.

The application process.

Returning TESIS students who are considering the program will be introduced to the IB program in their 9th or 10th grade year by the IB Coordinator and will determine an appropriate course of study in consultation with him. They will be asked to complete the attached application form using the information contained in the section “Choosing Courses for the IB Program at TESIS” and will be interviewed by the IB Coordinator. Their TESIS teachers will also be canvassed on their suitability for the IB program, and their grades will be reviewed.

New students should also complete the attached form using the information contained in the section “Choosing Courses for the IB program at TESIS” and return it with their application to join TESIS. They can contact the IB Coordinator personally if they have any questions about the appropriateness of the courses they have chosen using this guide. Non-native speakers of English must complete the TESIS Writing Proficiency Test. Acceptance to study at TESIS does not guarantee entry into the IB program as the latter is dependent on a good academic record and placement into the IB equivalent of the TESIS courses English-as-an-Additional Language V (EAL V) and Integrated Mathematics III. In some cases a student’s math, language or science background prohibits participation in the full IB Diploma program, but these students may be able to either take IB Certificates in the 11th and 12th grades or complete the full IB Diploma in the 12th and 13th grades. IB Certificates can count as the equivalent of Advanced Placement (AP) courses for many US universities and so earn college credit.

Students intending to take the IB Diploma are encouraged to join TESIS, at least, in the 10th grade. This will allow them to prepare more appropriately for the IB program, receive counseling on course choices, to be placed more accurately in appropriate English and mathematics levels, and possibly to begin two IB SL courses which can be completed at the end of the junior year as anticipated exams. IB students may take a maximum of two Standard Level exams at the end of their junior year. This allows them to concentrate on the remaining subjects in their senior year. They can retake these exams at the end of the second year to improve their score.

Parents should note that there are additional fees levied by the IB for examinations. This is approximately SFr 1000 for a Diploma candidate. Parents should also be aware that they must agree in writing to the IB General Regulations and Amendments (http://www.ibo.org/documentlibrary/regs_ibworldschools/) in order for a student to study IB subjects and to take IB exams.

Remaining in the IB Diploma program.

Students must maintain good academic and effort grades, and meet all TESIS and IB assignment deadlines (including course assignments and extended essay deadlines, and CAS requirements) throughout the two-year program. Failure to do so will result in a student’s IB status being reviewed and withdrawal from the program being considered. An application to the program assumes agreement with these conditions.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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IB Coordinator

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CHOOSING COURSES

FOR THE IB PROGRAM AT TESIS

The following is intended to guide the choice of courses for the IB Diploma or Certificates and should be used in completing the TESIS IB application form. All returning students (Certificate as well as Diploma) should use the guidelines below to make their choices and may also wish to consult the IB Coordinator, teachers, Departments Heads, and the College Counselor. New students should follow the guidelines below and address questions to the IB Coordinator at ib@tesis.ch

How do university plans affect IB course choices?

An awareness of the country, institutions and subjects for post-TESIS education will help determine the best choice of IB courses at TESIS. In reality, many students do not have a clear idea of their higher education plans before studying the IB Diploma at TESIS and consequently it is necessary to make subject choices which leave as many higher education options open as possible. For those intent on studying a particular subject in a particular country, the choice of IB subjects must follow requirements established by that country or institution.

Entry to **US** universities does not require an IB Diploma, but there is growing recognition of the value of the Diploma and Certificates and students who do well in the IB will find their application enhanced. Advance placement can be obtained from many US universities for high IB scores. The IB Diploma is recognized throughout **Canada** as an admissions credential. Some of the most selective universities may require it for the admission of students who have been studying outside Canada. Many universities grant credit and/or advanced placement for students with Higher Level certificates. Some universities allow Diploma students entry directly into the second year.

For **British** universities IB course choices at TESIS, and even choices between the Standard and Higher Levels of a course, can in some cases determine where, and in what subject areas, a student will be able to pursue university education. For example, students wishing to study economics at university must have IB Mathematics at HL. Engineering departments prefer Physics and Mathematics at HL. Art courses will require the portfolio of artwork produced in IB Visual Arts. Some subjects are frowned upon as being less academic by some universities and need to be avoided. Universities usually require a minimum number of points on the IB Diploma. Entry to Foundation Programs may be possible with IB Certificates.

German universities require that all IB courses are taken in the last two years of high school education and that a student has completed 12 years of education. It is required that German is studied as an A1 subject, that a second A1 or A2 language is studied along with History or Economics, that the science course is either Biology, Chemistry or Physics, and that the mathematics course is Mathematics SL or Mathematics HL. The math or science class must be at HL, and no subject can receive less than a grade 4.

The IB Diploma is recognized by the **Italian** Ministry of Education if it meets the following criteria:

Equivalent of the *maturita' linguistica*

1. A1 language HL
2. A second language HL
3. History or Economics SL or HL
4. Biology, Chemistry, Physics or Env. Systems SL
5. Math Studies or Mathematics SL
6. A third language SL or HL

Equivalent of the *maturita' scientifica*

1. A1 language SL or HL
2. A second language SL
3. History or Economics SL
4. Physics HL
5. Mathematics HL
6. Biology, Chemistry, or Visual Arts SL or HL or Env. Systems

Spain now recognizes the IB Diploma and no longer requires university entrance exams.

Swiss universities require a total of 32 points (without the extra points from the extended essay and TOK). The math or the science subject must be at HL. Group 3 subjects must be either History or Economics, and the following IB subjects offered at TASIS are generally not recognised: Mathematical Studies, Visual Arts, Theatre Arts, Art History, and Environmental Systems. Competency in the language of instruction at the university is expected; although, this is not currently a requirement for the Università della svizzera italiana (USI) in Lugano.

As each country, and even university, has different requirements it is essential that these requirements are checked on the IB website <http://www.ibo.org/diploma/recognition/index.cfm> Countries and individual universities can, and do, change their IB entry requirements, and it is always best to contact the universities directly to obtain written confirmation of their entry requirements if there is doubt.

Use the following question and answer section to choose six subjects.

At least three must be at Higher Level and three must be at Standard Level.

You may wish to consult the Course Offerings Booklet (<http://switzerland.tasis.com/page.cfm?p=239>) when completing the following.

Group 1 — A First Language : Language A1

Q. How do I choose an A1 language?

A. This is your best language. It is the one that you can confidently read and write with native language proficiency. At present, TASIS offers taught A1 language classes in English, German, Italian and Russian at Higher and Standard Level. The program of study centers around the reading and critical discussion, orally and in writing, of literary texts. It is not a course for foreign learners of the language.

Q. What are my options if I do not have native proficiency in English, German, Italian or Russian?

A. You may study your native language as a School-supported Self-taught A1 Language at Standard Level. Some support is provided at TASIS, but all students are expected to arrange tutorial assistance, either locally or at home during the vacations, at their own extra cost.. Among self-taught languages that students have studied in recent years are Bulgarian, Chinese, Dutch, Japanese, Norwegian, Portuguese, Serbian, Spanish, Turkish, and Ukrainian.

Now choose ONE Group 1 subject:

A1 Taught Language (circle one): English / German / Italian / Russian Level (circle one): HL / SL
or

A1 School-supported Self-taught Language: (name)..... Level: SL
If your mother-tongue is not English, you must take English as a Group 2 subject (see below).

Group 2 — Languages A2, B Ab initio or a second A1 language

All IB Diploma students must study a second language.

Q. Which language should I choose?

A. Choose your second best language or a language you wish to start in the IB program.

Q. What is an A2 language?

A. This is a language and literature program for highly competent (native or near-native) speakers of the language. At TASIS, A2 classes are offered in English at SL and HL and in French if enrolment is sufficient. Other A2 languages may be considered but require tutorial assistance and incur an additional fee. This must be discussed with the IB Coordinator prior to the enrolment of a student for the IB Diploma program at TASIS.

Q. What is a B language?

A. Language B is a foreign language for students with previous experience of learning the language. To start a B language at Standard Level students should know the basic grammar and be able to write and

converse simply, but correctly, on topics of everyday life. They should have studied the language for one year at least prior to commencing the course. HL students should have studied the language for at least two years. At TASIS, French, Italian and Spanish are offered at Standard and Higher Level as a two-year sequence. Two years of English Language B are the equivalent of the TASIS EAL 5 and EAL 6 courses.

In most university systems, the B Higher Level examination qualifies students for study at institutions where the examined language is the language of instruction. (For example, an American student with a good command of French at B Higher Level should have the language skills needed to study at a French university.)

Q. Why would I choose an ab initio language?

A. It is an opportunity to learn a new language. Ab initio is a foreign language for beginners, or near-beginners, and is offered at the Standard Level. TASIS offers ab initio courses in French, Italian and Spanish.

Q. Can I study a second A1 language in Group 2?

A. Students who are bilingual may study more than one A1 language, but not if you are learning this language as a foreign language. A1 languages are advanced literature-based courses and not language courses.

Now choose ONE Group 2 subject:

- A2 Languages: (circle one) English A2 / other (name) _____ Level (circle one): HL / SL
or
B Languages : (circle one) English B / French B / Italian B / Spanish B Level (circle one): HL / SL
or
Ab initio Languages.(circle one) French AB / Italian AB / Spanish AB Level: SL only
or
A1 language (circle one): English A1 /German A1 /Italian A1 /Russian A1 Level (circle one): HL / SL

Group 3—Individuals and Societies

Q. What criteria should I use to select a Group 3 subject?

A. IB History is recommended for students with a strong interest in the humanities and should be considered if you are intending to study history, law or PPE (Politics, Philosophy and Economics) at European universities. IB Economics is not an essential prerequisite for studying economics or business at university, and it requires not only good English language skills but also a good command of mathematics. IB Art History is only offered at SL and is a one-year class taken in the senior year.

Now choose ONE Group 3 subject:

- (Circle one) History / Economics/Art History (the latter is SL only) Level (circle one): HL / SL

Group 4 — Experimental Sciences

Q. What criteria should I use to select a Group 4 subject?

A. Your interest in a particular science, previous study of the subject, your math and English level and university entrance requirements are all important factors. Your career ambitions are an important consideration too. For example, medical students would be expected to have studied Biology and Chemistry at HL, while engineers would be expected to take Physics and Chemistry at HL. A student not interested in studying science related subjects at university will still need to consider taking the most challenging science course they can handle.

Now choose ONE Group 4 subject:

- (Circle one) Biology / Chemistry / Physics Level (circle one): HL / SL
or
Environmental Systems and Societies Level: SL only

Group 5— Mathematics

Q. How do I choose the correct math level from among the three levels offered?

A. The **Mathematics HL** course is intended for students who will pursue economics, mathematics, physics or engineering at university. In order to successfully attempt this course, students should have completed Integrated Mathematics 3 with a high grade before choosing this level. **Mathematics SL** is calculus-based, with the first year equivalent to Pre-Calculus and the second year equivalent to Calculus. Most universities accept this level as satisfactory preparation for advanced study in the medical, natural and social sciences. **Mathematical Studies SL** is not calculus-based. The syllabus emphasizes the application of concepts from algebra, geometry and trigonometry to everyday life. The IBO anticipates that as many as 50% of all students will study mathematics at this level and it is intended for those going on to study the arts or humanities. Entry requires successful completion of Integrated Mathematics II.

Now choose ONE Group 5 subject:

(Circle one) Mathematics HL / Mathematics SL / Mathematical Studies SL.

Group 6 — The Fine Arts and Electives

The Diploma candidate may fulfill the Group 6 requirement by taking a second course in any of Groups 1-4 (i.e., a third language, a second social science, or a second experimental science), or by taking Visual Arts (SL or HL), or Theatre Arts (SL or HL).

Q. What will guide my choice of a sixth subject?

A. A student who wishes to study fine art subjects at university would be best advised to take an art or theatre course. Medical students or engineers need to take a second science, while a student interested in the humanities who has selected History for Group 3 may wish to choose Economics. A linguist may wish to choose a third language. The IB Visual Arts course can be completed by studying Art & Design, Architecture & Design or Photography courses at TASIS. Students engage in studio work, maintain a research workbook and build an extensive portfolio which may be essential for entry to university.

Now choose ONE group 6 subject:

Visual Arts (Circle one) Art & Design / Architecture & Design / Photography Level (circle one): HL / SL
or

Theatre Arts Level (circle one): HL / SL
or

A second A2 Languages: (circle one) English A2 / other (name) _____ Level (circle one): HL / SL
or

A second B Languages : (circle one) English B / French B / Italian B / Spanish B (circle one): HL / SL
or

A second Ab initio Languages. (circle one) French AB / Italian AB / Spanish AB Level: SL only
or

A third A1 language (circle one): English / German / Italian / Russian Level (circle one): HL / SL
or

A Group 3 subject: (Circle one) History / Economics / Art History (SL only) Level (circle one): HL / SL
or

A Group 4 subject: (Circle one) Biology / Chemistry / Physics Level (circle one): HL / SL
or
Environmental Systems and Societies Level: SL only

Now transfer your choices to the first page of the application form and complete the remaining sections of the application.

Application for the International Baccalaureate Program at TASIS

Personal Information:

Name: _____ Birth date: _____

1st Nationality: _____ 1st Language: _____

COLLEGE PLANS: Subjects likely to be studied at university: _____

Where might you attend college or university? (Circle any that may apply)

US UK Canada Italy Germany Switzerland France Other _____

COURSES & ACADEMIC GRADES IN THE YEAR PRIOR TO ENTRY TO IB	IB Group (group #)	COURSE SELECTION (Circle ONE subject from EACH of the 6 IB Group below and circle the level in the last column. 3 HL and 3 SL subjects must be chosen.)	Level
_____ English Course & level Grade _____ _____ Italian Course & level Grade _____ _____ French Course & level Grade _____ _____ Spanish Course & level Grade _____ _____ Other language & level Grade _____	Language A1 (1) Language 2 (2)	German A1 SL/HL Italian A1 SL/HL English A1 SL/HL Russian A1 SL/HL Self-taught Language A1 _____ SL only (A1 native language will involve tutoring at extra cost if a tutor is available for this language.) English A2 SL/HL An additional A1 language at SL French A2 SL/HL or HL that is not already English B HL selected above: Italian B SL/HL German A1 Italian A1 French B SL/HL English A1 Russian A1 Spanish B SL/HL Tutorial A2 language: Italian ab initio SL French ab initio SL Spanish ab initio SL _____ (A2 tutorials are at extra cost)	HL or SL HL or SL
_____ 10 th Grade History Course Grade _____	Individuals & Societies (3)	History SL/HL Economics SL/HL Art History SL (one-year course in 12 th grade)	HL or SL
_____ 10 th Grade Science Course Grade _____	Experimental Sciences (4)	Biology SL/HL Chemistry SL/HL Physics SL/HL Environmental Systems and Societies SL	HL or SL
_____ 10 th Grade Math Course Grade _____	Math (5)	Math Studies SL Mathematics SL Mathematics HL	HL or SL
_____ Art, Drama or Other Elective Grade _____ _____ Art, Drama or Other Elective Grade _____	Arts & Electives (6)	Theatre Arts SL/HL Biology SL/HL Visual Arts SL/HL Chemistry SL/HL French B SL/HL Environmental Systems & Soc. SL Spanish B SL/HL Physics SL/HL Italian B SL/HL History SL/HL Italian ab initio SL Economics SL/HL French ab initio SL Art History SL Spanish ab initio SL A1 language _____	HL or SL

Entry into the IB Diploma Program is made through consultation between the school, student and family, and is open to highly motivated students in good academic standing, and with good time management and study skills. Other minimum prerequisites for entry include placement into the IB equivalent of the TASIS English-as-an-Additional Language (EAL) V and Integrated Mathematics III courses. In some cases a student's math, language or science background prohibits participation in the full diploma program, but these students may discuss, with the IB Coordinator, the taking of IB Certificates or the completion of the full IB Diploma in the 12th and 13th grades. Unfortunately not all course combinations are possible due to scheduling constraints, and sufficient enrolment is required for a course to be offered. There are additional fees levied by the IBO (approximately Sfr. 1000) for registration and exams.

Writing Proficiency Test

To be completed by non-native speakers of English

Directions:

1. **Read the article by Thomas Gagen on the Babar books by Jean de Brunhoff. (15-20 minutes). DO NOT TAKE NOTES.**
2. **When you are finished reading, put the article away. IMPORTANT: DO NOT LOOK AT THE TEXT WHILE YOU WRITE!**
3. **Write an essay on the following:**
What is Thomas Gagen's point of view?
Begin by summarizing the article. Then comment on what the writer has to say.
4. **Return your essay together with the application form to the TESIS Admissions office.**

The evergreen elephant, Babar's enduring appeal

Thomas Gagen, The Boston Globe TUESDAY, AUGUST 15, 2006

BOSTON Babar, the storybook elephant created by the artist Jean de Brunhoff, reached the venerable age of 75 this year. France issued a commemorative stamp to celebrate what has become an epitome of French culture and a major export earner.

But there hasn't been much notice here in the United States except for an undercurrent of belief that Babar is too sexist, racist or imperialist for children today. An overly-scrupulous reader can find all sorts of messages in the 30 or so Babar books published since 1931, but the basic themes, as laid out in the first "Story of Babar," are enthralling, innocent and reassuring.

I've practically memorized the book from repeated reading to three children, starting more than 20 years ago. I pulled it out of storage the other day and was once again captivated by the simple plot: Babar is living idyllically in the jungle with his mother, until she is killed by a hunter.

He flees to the big city (is it Paris?), where he is befriended by the Old Lady, who dresses and educates him as a French gentleman. Steeped in the knowledge of man, he returns to elephant land where he is elected the king (the incumbent having died from eating a bad mushroom). He marries his cousin Celeste, has a grand party, and he and his bride leave on their honeymoon in a balloon.

The hard-cover "Story of Babar" measures about 37 centimeters high by 27 centimeters wide. It's huge by the standards of most children's books, and envelops readers in the story. Like many children's classics, the story concerns loss and grief, but doesn't dwell on either.

Once Babar gets to the city, he is swept into a culture of knowledge and love. He goes up and down on an elevator; buys a green suit, shoes and spats; learns arithmetic; and converses with the Old Lady's friends. And when his cousins Arthur and Celeste visit, he demonstrates his newfound sophistication by treating them to "some good cakes" at a patisserie. I've enjoyed watching Arthur master this idealized French culture. My children did, too.

Others disagree. "Imperialistic Propaganda for the kiddies," declares one of the few negative reviews of "Story of Babar" on Amazon.com. The educator Herbert Kohl entitled a collection of essays "Should We Burn Babar?" He concluded that we should not - but we shouldn't buy the book, either.

Kohl's main objection is that Babar, an African elephant, gains power from being Europeanized, and that Celeste is subservient to him. I suppose somebody reading this in 1930s France would have their prejudices about the benefits of French colonization confirmed. But children today receive many messages to counteract whatever they get from Babar. And the book is so unmistakably French that whatever imperialistic subtext it contains is lost on young American readers.

The novelist Alison Lurie took a critical look at the Babar chronicles for the New York Review of Books a couple of years ago. As is to be expected, she found that a few of the books were objectionable by any reasonable standards today, the most egregious being "The Travels of Babar," immediate sequel to the first book, in which black Africans are caricatured as spear-wielding savages.

But she found that the Babar saga endures because children see themselves in the intrepid elephant. Like him, they like to ride up and down on elevators, and their lives are changing as they get new clothes, learn manners, and start their formal education in preparation for life beyond the immediate family. Perhaps Babar's quick recovery from his mother's death and his success in both the city and the elephants' country offer young readers hope that they, too, can master their new environments.

Looking at the "Story of Babar," I'm reminded of many evenings snuggled up with a child, and this commodious book, and its familiar phrases - "some good cakes," "bad mushroom" - and my parenthetical explanation of those archaic ankle-coverings called spats. It's a tale that endures beyond ideology or prejudice.

I wish my children were young enough for just a few minutes so I could read it to them again.

Thomas Gagen is a member of the editorial board of The Boston Globe.

All documents should be addressed to:

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TASIS is accredited by the New England Association of Schools & Colleges and the European Council of International Schools

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TASIS is an IB world school