

# Political thought guide

*School-based syllabus*

First assessment 2017

**Diploma Programme**  
**Political Thought—guide**

This school-based syllabus guide was revised in 2014/2015 in conjunction with King's College, Wimbledon.

The original subject syllabus was produced in 2004 by the United World College of the Atlantic,  
in conjunction with the IB

International Baccalaureate Organization  
Peterson House, Malthouse Avenue, Cardiff Gate  
Cardiff, Wales GB CF23 8GL  
United Kingdom  
Phone: +44 29 2054 7777  
Fax: +44 29 2054 7778  
Web site: <http://www.ibo.org>

©International Baccalaureate Organization 2004, 2014/5, 2016

# CONTENTS

## Introduction

---

Purpose of this document	4
The Diploma Programme	5
Nature of the subject	9
Aims	12
Assessment objectives	13
Assessment objectives in practice	14

## Syllabus

---

Syllabus outline	15
Syllabus content	16

## Assessment

---

Assessment in the Diploma Programme	21
Assessment outline—SL	24
External assessment	25
External assessment criteria—SL	26
External assessment markbands	27
Internal assessment	30

Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning in Political Thought	36
--	----

---

## Appendices

---

Glossary of command terms	37
---------------------------	----

## Introduction

### Purpose of this document

This publication is intended to guide the planning, teaching and assessment of the subject in schools. Subject teachers are the primary audience, although it is expected that teachers will use the guide to inform students and parents about the subject.

This school-based syllabus guide is not a published sales item—copies are made freely available by the IB (contact IB Answers). This guide will be made available on a page dedicated to the school-based syllabuses (SBSs) on the online curriculum centre (OCC) at <http://occ.ibo.org>, a password-protected IB website designed to support IB teachers.

### Additional resources

Additional resources such as specimen and past examination papers, student sample work and grade descriptors will also be made available on the OCC. In the meantime, please contact IB Answers to enquire about these.

Teachers are encouraged to share resources with other teachers, for example: websites, books, videos, journals or teaching ideas. This is particularly important in SBS subjects, where the IB expects schools to support each other in the advancement of their subject. The “host” school for an SBS is usually able to provide information and contact details of other schools offering the subject. Schools are given contact details of the host school for their SBS in their letter of authorization.

### Acknowledgment

The IB wishes to thank the educators and associated schools for generously contributing time and resources to the production of this guide, in particular, to John Lawrence of King’s College Wimbledon and to Ray Silkstone, formerly of the United World College of the Atlantic.

**First assessment 2017**

## The Diploma Programme

The Diploma Programme 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 Diploma Programme model

The course is presented as six academic areas enclosing a central core. It encourages the concurrent study of a broad range of academic areas. 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. 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.



The Diploma Programme model

## Choosing the right combination

Students are required to choose one subject from each of the six academic areas, although they can, instead of an arts subject, choose two subjects from another area. 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.

At both levels, many skills are developed, especially those of critical thinking and analysis. At the end of the course, students' abilities are measured by means of external assessment. Many subjects contain some element of coursework assessed by teachers.

## The core of the Diploma Programme model

All Diploma Programme students participate in the three elements that make up the core of the model.

Theory of knowledge (TOK) is a course that is fundamentally about critical thinking and inquiry into the process of knowing rather than about learning a specific body of knowledge. The TOK course examines the nature of knowledge and how we know what we claim to know. It does this by encouraging students to analyse knowledge claims and explore questions about the construction of knowledge. The task of TOK is to emphasize connections between areas of shared knowledge and link them to personal knowledge in such a way that an individual becomes more aware of his or her own perspectives and how they might differ from others.

Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS) is at the heart of the Diploma Programme. CAS enables students to live out the IB learner profile in real and practical ways, to grow as unique individuals and to recognise their role in relation to others. Students develop skills, attitudes and dispositions through a variety of individual and group experiences that provides students opportunities to explore their interests and express their passions, personalities and perspectives. CAS complements a challenging academic programme in a holistic way, providing opportunities for self-determination, collaboration, accomplishment and enjoyment.

The three strands of CAS are:

Creativity - exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance

Activity - physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle

Service - collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need

The extended essay, including the world studies extended essay, offers the opportunity for IB students to investigate a topic of special interest, in the form of a 4,000-word piece of independent research. The area of research undertaken is chosen from one of the students' six Diploma Programme subjects, or in the case of the inter-disciplinary World Studies essay, two subjects, and acquaints them with the independent research and writing skills expected at university. This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject or subjects chosen. It is intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity. An authentic learning experience it provides students with an opportunity to engage in personal research on a topic of choice, under the guidance of a supervisor.

### School-based syllabuses—regulations

- school-based syllabuses are only available at standard level.
- school-based syllabuses may only be offered by schools who have been authorized by the IB to do so prior to the commencement of the course.
- a student may not combine an SBS with a pilot programme or another SBS within the same Diploma.

### Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning

Approaches to teaching and learning across the Diploma Programme refers to deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes which permeate the teaching and learning environment. These approaches and tools, intrinsically linked with the learner profile attributes, enhance student learning and assist student preparation for the Diploma Programme assessment and beyond. The aims of approaches to teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme are to:

- empower teachers as teachers of learners as well as teachers of content
- empower teachers to create clearer strategies for facilitating learning experiences in which students are more meaningfully engaged in structured inquiry and greater critical and creative thinking
- promote both the aims of individual subjects (making them more than course aspirations) and linking previously isolated knowledge (concurrency of learning)
- encourage students to develop an explicit variety of skills that will equip them to continue to be actively engaged in learning after they leave school, and to help them not only obtain university admission through better grades but also prepare for success during tertiary education and beyond

- enhance further the coherence and relevance of the students' Diploma Programme experience
- allow schools to identify the distinctive nature of an IB Diploma Programme education, with its blend of idealism and practicality.

The five approaches to learning (developing thinking skills, social skills, communication skills, self-management skills and research skills) along with the six approaches to teaching (teaching that is inquiry-based, conceptually focussed, contextualised, collaborative, differentiated and informed by assessment) encompass the key values and principles that underpin IB pedagogy.

It is hoped that further guidance on approaches to teaching and approaches to learning in political thought may be added to this guide as resources permit.

## Academic honesty

Academic honesty in the Diploma Programme is a set of values and behaviours informed by the attributes of the learner profile. In teaching, learning and assessment, academic honesty serves to promote personal integrity, engender respect for the integrity of others and their work, and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquire during their studies.

All coursework—including work submitted for assessment—is to be authentic, based on the student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Assessment tasks that require teachers to provide guidance to students or that require students to work collaboratively must be completed in full compliance with the detailed guidelines provided by the IB for the relevant subjects.

For further information on academic honesty in the IB and the Diploma Programme, please consult the IB publications *Academic honesty, The Diploma Programme: From principles into practice* and *General regulations: Diploma Programme*. Specific information regarding academic honesty as it pertains to external and internal assessment components of this Diploma Programme subject can be found in this guide.

## Learning diversity and learning support requirements

Schools must ensure that equal access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are provided to candidates with learning support requirements that are in line with the IB documents *Candidates with assessment access requirements* and *Learning diversity within the International Baccalaureate programmes/Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes*.



## Nature of the subject

### Political Thought

Political Thought is concerned specifically with the issue of how people can best live together: it does not simply describe how society functions, but asks how it ought to function. It is a normative subject in its concern with questions such as how we should treat one another and how society's resources should be shared between us.

This course will provide students with the opportunity to address such questions by introducing them to a range of political ideas and concepts such as freedom, rights, equality and democracy. Although they may be informed by different cultural perspectives, such concepts remain at the heart of contemporary political discourse. The course is based on the assumption that an appreciation of concepts develops most effectively when students have first been introduced to the work of some classical thinkers. The ideas of the thinkers selected help to illuminate four of the key ideologies that have shaped the modern world, namely liberalism, conservatism, Marxism and anarchism. With these building blocks in place, a deeper understanding can be gained of contemporary issues and debates.

The Political Thought course will not only be an appropriate preparation for university courses in this and related disciplines, but will also provide a means of encouraging and improving political discussion among students. There can be few more fascinating areas of study than one whose ultimate concern is to explore the nature of the 'good society'.

### Distinction between SL and HL

Political thought, like all school-based syllabuses, is only available as a standard level subject.

### Political Thought and the core

As with all Diploma Programme courses, political thought should both support, and be supported by, the three elements of the Diploma Programme core.

Group 3 subjects study individuals and societies. More commonly, these subjects are collectively known as the human sciences or social sciences. In essence, Group 3 subjects explore the interactions between humans and their environment in time, space and place.

As with other areas of knowledge, there are a variety of ways of gaining knowledge in Group 3 subjects. Archival evidence, data collection, experimentation and observation, inductive and deductive reasoning for example, can all be used to help explain patterns of behaviour and lead to knowledge claims. Students in Group 3 subjects are required to evaluate these knowledge claims by exploring knowledge issues such as validity, reliability, credibility, certainty, and individual as well as cultural perspectives.

The relationship between Group 3 subjects and Theory of Knowledge (TOK) is of crucial importance and fundamental to the Diploma programme. Having followed a course of study in Group 3, students should be able to critically reflect on the various ways of knowing and on the methods used in human sciences, and in so doing become "inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people" (IBO Mission Statement).

During the course a number of issues will arise that highlight the relationship between TOK and political thought. Examples of questions related to theory of knowledge that political thought students might consider include the following.

- How does knowledge in the social sciences differ from knowledge in other areas?
- How does knowledge in political thought differ from knowledge in some other social science disciplines, such as history, economics and geography?
- How do the often deeply held nature of political beliefs and biases affect the acquisition and understanding of knowledge of political thought?
- How is political thought distinct from the practice of politics?
- What are the benefits and difficulties of examining political issues against the backdrop of a certain theoretical foundation or ideology?
- Can we have political beliefs or knowledge that are independent of our cultures?
- Why do some individuals believe that they know what is right for others?
- How do we decide between the opinions of experts when they disagree? Who are the experts in political thought?
- What is the role of communication and media in shaping people's perception of issues in political thought?
- Is it ever justifiable to act without having good grounds or evidence for doing so?

### Political Thought and international-mindedness

It is hoped that students' own particular cultural perceptions will aid and enhance their study of political thought by introducing new preoccupations and questions; and that the subject in turn will provide them with a lasting platform for the study of human aims and aspirations, as well as foster in them a wish to become intellectually rigorous, compassionate and active participants in the quest for intercultural understanding that underpins the IB mission.

In this respect, political thought aims to help students develop the values that underpin the IB learner profile, in order that they should become 'internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help create a better and more peaceful world.'

### Engaging with sensitive topics

Studying political thought allows the opportunity for students to engage with stimulating and, possibly, personally relevant, ideas. However it should be noted that often such ideas can also be sensitive and personally or culturally challenging. Teachers should be aware of this and provide guidance to students on how to approach and engage with such ideas in a responsible manner, providing due cognizance to questions and issues of identity.

## Prior learning

The political thought course requires no specific prior learning. No particular background in terms of specific subjects studied for national or international qualifications is expected or required. The specific skills of the political thought course are developed within the context of the course itself.

## Links to the Middle Years Programme

The concepts of Middle Years Programme (MYP) humanities can provide a useful foundation for students who go on to study Diploma Programme political thought. An understanding, developed through the MYP humanities course, of the concepts of time, place and space, change, and global awareness is developed further within the political thought course. Analytical and investigative skills developed in the MYP humanities course are augmented and expanded through the political thought course.

## Links to the IB Career Related Programme

In the IB Career-related Programme (IBCP), students study at least two Diploma Programme subjects which support their career-related study. Political thought can serve this purpose for IBCP students

## Aims

### Individuals and societies aims

The aims of all subjects in the individuals and societies subject group are to:

1. encourage the systematic and critical study of: human experience and behaviour; physical, economic and social environments; and the history and development of social and cultural institutions
2. develop in the student the capacity to identify, to analyse critically and to evaluate theories, concepts and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society
3. enable the student to collect, describe and analyse data used in studies of society, to test hypotheses, and to interpret complex data and source material
4. promote the appreciation of the way in which learning is relevant both to the culture in which the student lives, and the culture of other societies
5. develop an awareness in the student that human attitudes and beliefs are widely diverse and that the study of society requires an appreciation of such diversity
6. enable the student to recognize that the content and methodologies of the individuals and societies subjects are contestable and that their study requires the toleration of uncertainty.

### Political Thought aims

The aims of the Diploma Programme Political Thought course at standard level are to:

1. introduce some major political concepts and works of political theory.
2. develop awareness and understanding of the complexity of political issues..
3. develop the ability to interpret and evaluate political ideas and concepts..
4. encourage a critical awareness of different ideological perspectives.
5. promote the development of independent and critical judgement and communication of such judgements with clarity and coherence.

## Assessment objectives

### **Assessment objective 1: knowledge and understanding**

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of political concepts and thinkers
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of political issues
- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of set texts

### **Assessment objective 2: application and analysis**

- analyse material critically with appropriate use of evidence
- recognise connections between political theory and contemporary political issues (IA)

### **Assessment objective 3: synthesis and evaluation**

- interpret and evaluate political information
- demonstrate a critical awareness of different ideological perspectives
- synthesise own knowledge and source material

### **Assessment objective 4: selection, use and application of appropriate skills and techniques**

- communicate ideas and construct arguments clearly and coherently
- plan, organize and present an investigation of a relevant political issue (IA).

## Assessment objectives in practice

Assessment objective	Which component addresses this assessment objective?	How is the assessment objective addressed?
<b>Assessment objective 1: knowledge and understanding</b>	Paper 1 Paper 2 Internal assessment	Paper 1: answer questions on four prescribed texts Paper 2: examination of four political concepts Internal assessment: investigation into a political issue of contemporary relevance
<b>Assessment objective 2: application and analysis</b>	Paper 1 Paper 2 Internal assessment	Paper 1: answer questions on four prescribed texts Paper 2: examination of four political concepts Internal assessment: investigation into a political issue of contemporary relevance
<b>Assessment objective 3: synthesis and evaluation</b>	Paper 1 Paper 2 Internal assessment	Paper 1: answer questions on four prescribed texts Paper 2: examination of four political concepts Internal assessment: investigation into a political issue of contemporary relevance
<b>Assessment objective 4: selection, use and application of appropriate skills and techniques</b>	Paper 1 Paper 2 Internal assessment	Paper 1: answer questions on four prescribed texts Paper 2: examination of four political concepts Internal assessment: an investigation into a political issue of contemporary relevance

## Syllabus outline

Syllabus component	Teaching hours
	SL
<p><b>Topic 1 : Political Thinkers</b></p> <p>A <b>detailed</b> study of four texts:</p> <p>Mill, John Stuart      <i>On Liberty</i></p> <p>Burke, Edmund      <i>Reflections on the Revolution in France (extracts)</i></p> <p>Marx/Engels      <i>The Communist Manifesto</i></p> <p>Woodcock (ed.)      <i>The Anarchist Reader (extracts)</i></p>	<b>50</b>
<p><b>Topic 2 : Political Concepts</b></p> <p>A <b>detailed</b> study of the following linked political concepts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Liberty (freedom) and toleration</li> <li>• Equality and social justice</li> <li>• Rights and obligations</li> <li>• Democracy and representation</li> </ul>	<b>70</b>
Investigation of a political issue of contemporary relevance.	<b>30</b>
<b>Total teaching hours</b>	<b>150</b>

The recommended teaching time is 150 hours to complete SL courses as stated in the document *General regulations: Diploma Programme for students and their legal guardians* (page 4 article 8.2)

## Syllabus content

### Topic 1: Political Thinkers

The four texts for detailed study have been chosen to illustrate different liberal, conservative, Marxist and anarchist perspectives (see bibliography on page 33 for details of publishers). It is important that study of the various thinkers is informed by a historical understanding of the context in which they wrote. Within each text particular emphasis should be given to the key issues listed below.

#### John Stuart Mill

##### *On Liberty*

- Mill's 'harm principle' and his utilitarian approach
- definition of 'the appropriate region of human liberty'
- defence of freedom of expression
- proposed limits on freedom of opinion and action
- importance of individuality
- the role of "persons of genius"
- liberty and progress
- the limits of society's authority over the individual.

#### Edmund Burke

##### *Reflections on the Revolution in France (extracts)*

- The importance of inheritance and the 'pattern of nature'
- criticisms of the French revolutionaries and abstract rights
- definition of the 'real rights of men'
- the importance of prejudice
- religion as the basis of civil society
- definition of society as a contract
- criticisms of democracy and majority rule.

These areas are covered in the following pages of the Penguin Classics edition of *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, edited by Conor Cruise O'Brien. The page references are as follows:

'Inheritance and the pattern of nature'	pp117–122
'The Real Rights of Men'	pp148–156
'Cherishing our prejudices'	pp182–184
'Society is indeed a contract'	pp194–195
'What's wrong with democracy'	pp 228–229; 373–374



## **Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels**

### *The Communist Manifesto*

- The class struggle and, especially, the class struggle in capitalist society
- the bourgeois epoch and the progressive role of the bourgeoisie
- the historical development of the proletariat and their inevitable victory over the bourgeoisie
- the role of the Communist Party
- abolition of private property; historical materialism
- the proletarian revolution and the achievement of communism.

## **George Woodcock (ed.)**

### *The Anarchist Reader*

The nine prescribed extracts are:

- Malatesta 'Anarchy Defined'
- Bakunin 'The Illusion of Universal Suffrage' and 'Perils of the Marxist State'
- Goldman 'The Failure of the Russian Revolution'
- Kropotkin 'Anarchism and Violence'
- Berkman 'The Violence of the Lawful World'
- Thoreau 'Civil Disobedience'
- Woodcock 'Syndicalism Defined'
- Tolstoy 'Arranging our Lives'
- Berkman 'Lazy Men and Dirty Work'.

Key issues are:

- definitions of anarchism
- anarchist criticisms of liberal democracy and Marxism
- anarchist approaches to revolution and protest
- visions of an anarchist society.

## Topic 2: Political Concepts

Building on knowledge acquired through a detailed study of the texts in Topic 1, students can go on to develop their understanding of the following political concepts:

- liberty (freedom) and toleration
- equality and social justice
- rights and obligations
- democracy and representation.

The political thought course is driven by two clear aims: to encourage pupils to read and understand some of the key works (topic 1) that underpin the major western political ideologies and to use those works to illuminate and inform their thinking about the key political concepts that they will study in topic two.

Mill's *On Liberty* establishes the foundation of liberal thought as do Burke's *Reflections* and Marx's *Communist Manifesto* for conservative and socialist thinking respectively. The selection of anarchist readings in contrast challenges the very idea of the state and political authority. Reading these key works in their entirety (or very substantial selections thereof) gives pupils a deep understanding of these crucial political texts.

Topic two widens their study by looking at the concepts of liberty & toleration; equality and social justice; democracy; political obligation and rights. The links between the set texts and these concepts are legion and, having studied the former, pupils will be able to interpret and understand the latter using material from major political philosophers. For example, the study of *On Liberty* is the essential starting point for any discussion of freedom and toleration. From there it is logical to move to a critique of classical liberalism and engage in discussions of positive and negative liberty drawing on, for example, Berlin's *Two Essays*, Benjamin Constant's work, and Charles Taylor's defence of positive freedom. In similar vein, Marx's ideas developed in the *Manifesto* provide an excellent basis for a study of equality and social justice that might encompass the thoughts of modern day Marxist Cohen as well as the ideas of Rawls, Hayek, and proponents of affirmative action. Burke provides a fundamental perspective on political obligation and Mill is perhaps surprisingly vocal on this, whilst the anarchists would question the very concept. Burke and Marx would disagree about natural/human rights and our anarchist thinkers would offer different perspectives on all these topics. Writings on liberty, equality and rights feed any discussion of democracy. These are merely a few pointers.

Beyond the set texts, there is a wealth of material that can be consulted (see the Political Thought bibliography for suggestions). An example might be to use extracts on political obligation and social contract theory using short extracts from Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau and David Hume or a discussion of democracy referring to Plato, Aristotle, Mill, de Tocqueville, and Carole Pateman on participatory democracy.

The main areas to be explored are listed below:

### **Liberty/Freedom and Toleration**

Definitions of liberty/freedom:

- 'negative' and 'positive' freedom
- historical development of the term
- liberal, conservative, Marxist and anarchist views of freedom.

Definitions of toleration:

- historical development of the term
- distinctions between tolerance and permissiveness
- arguments for and against toleration
- liberal, conservative, Marxist and anarchist views of toleration.

### **Equality and Social Justice**

Definitions of equality:

- foundational equality, formal equality, equality of opportunity
- equality of outcome
- historical development of the term
- liberal, conservative, Marxist and anarchist views of equality.

Definitions of social justice:

- historical development of the term and the controversy surrounding it
- liberal, socialist and conservative models of social justice.

### **Rights and Obligations**

Definitions of rights:

- moral rights
- legal rights
- negative and positive rights
- historical development of rights
- liberal, conservative, Marxist and anarchist views of rights.

Definitions of obligations:

- historical development of the term
- arguments for and against the social contract theory of obligation
- the limits of obligation
- liberal, conservative, Marxist and anarchist views of obligations.

## Democracy and Representation

Definitions of democracy:

- models of democracy (especially representative and direct)
- historical development of the term
- general arguments for and against democracy
- liberal, conservative, Marxist and anarchist views of democracy.

Definitions of representation:

- different types of representation – trustee, delegate, mandate, resemblance
- the limitations of representative democracy.

### Important note—use of sources

It will be important for teachers and students to draw on a range of sources, both historical and contemporary, to explore the different ideological approaches to each concept. For example, feminist perspectives on issues like equality and obligation help to give a new dimension to our understanding of these concepts.

Where appropriate, connections between political theory and current political issues should be made through relevant real-life examples.

# Assessment in the Diploma Programme

## General

Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. The most important aims of assessment in the Diploma Programme are that it should support curricular goals and encourage appropriate student learning. Both external and internal assessments are used in the Diploma Programme. IB examiners mark work produced for external assessment, while work produced for internal assessment is marked by teachers and externally moderated by the IB.

There are two types of assessment identified by the IB.

- Formative assessment informs both teaching and learning. It is concerned with providing accurate and helpful feedback to students and teachers on the kind of learning taking place and the nature of students' strengths and weaknesses in order to help develop students' understanding and capabilities. Formative assessment can also help to improve teaching quality, as it can provide information to monitor progress towards meeting the course aims and objectives.
- Summative assessment gives an overview of previous learning and is concerned with measuring student achievement.

The Diploma Programme primarily focuses on summative assessment designed to record student achievement at, or towards the end of, the course of study. However, many of the assessment instruments can also be used formatively during the course of teaching and learning, and teachers are encouraged to do this. A comprehensive assessment plan is viewed as being integral with teaching, learning and course organization. For further information, see the IB *Programme standards and practices* document.

The approach to assessment used by the IB is criterion-related, not norm-referenced. This approach to assessment judges students' work by their performance in relation to identified levels of attainment, and not in relation to the work of other students. For further information on assessment within the Diploma Programme please refer to the publication *Diploma Programme assessment: principles and practice*.

To support teachers in the planning, delivery and assessment of the Diploma Programme courses, a variety of resources can be found on the OCC or purchased from the IB store (<http://store.ibo.org>). Additional publications such as specimen papers and markschemes, teacher support materials, subject reports and grade descriptors can also be found on the OCC. Past examination papers as well as markschemes can be purchased from the IB store.

## Methods of assessment

The IB uses several methods to assess work produced by students.

### Assessment criteria

Assessment criteria are used when the assessment task is open-ended. Each criterion concentrates on a particular skill that students are expected to demonstrate. An assessment objective describes what students should be able to do, and assessment criteria describe how well they should be able to do it. Using assessment criteria allows discrimination between

different answers and encourages a variety of responses. Each criterion comprises a set of hierarchically ordered level descriptors. Each level descriptor is worth one or more marks. Each criterion is applied independently using a best-fit model. The maximum marks for each criterion may differ according to the criterion's importance. The marks awarded for each criterion are added together to give the total mark for the piece of work.

### Markbands

Markbands are a comprehensive statement of expected performance against which responses are judged. They represent a single holistic criterion divided into level descriptors. Each level descriptor corresponds to a range of marks to differentiate student performance. A best-fit approach is used to ascertain which particular mark to use from the possible range for each level descriptor.

### Analytic markschemes

Analytic markschemes are prepared for those examination questions that expect a particular kind of response and/or a given final answer from students. They give detailed instructions to examiners on how to break down the total mark for each question for different parts of the response.

### Marking notes

For some assessment components marked using assessment criteria, marking notes are provided. Marking notes give guidance on how to apply assessment criteria to the particular requirements of a question.

## Responsibilities of the school

The school is required to ensure that equal access arrangements and reasonable adjustments are provided to candidates with learning support requirements that are in line with the IB documents Candidates with assessment access requirements and Learning diversity within the International Baccalaureate programmes/Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes.

## Acknowledging the ideas or work of another person

Coordinators and teachers are reminded that candidates must acknowledge all sources used in work submitted for assessment. The following is intended as a clarification of this requirement.

Diploma Programme candidates submit work for assessment in a variety of media that may include audio-visual material, text, graphs, images and/or data published in print or electronic sources. If a candidate uses the work or ideas of another person, the candidate must acknowledge the source using a standard style of referencing in a consistent manner. A candidate's failure to acknowledge a source will be investigated by the IB as a potential breach of regulations that may result in a penalty imposed by the IB final award committee.

The IB does not prescribe which style(s) of referencing or in-text citation should be used by candidates; this is left to the discretion of appropriate faculty/staff in the candidate's school. The wide range of subjects, three response languages and the diversity of referencing styles make it impractical and restrictive to insist on particular styles. In practice, certain styles may prove most

commonly used, but schools are free to choose a style that is appropriate for the subject concerned and the language in which candidates' work is written. Regardless of the reference style adopted by the school for a given subject, it is expected that the minimum information given includes: name of author, date of publication, title of source, and page numbers as applicable.

Candidates are expected to use a standard style and use it consistently so that credit is given to all sources used, including sources that have been paraphrased or summarized. When writing text a candidate must clearly distinguish between their words and those of others by the use of quotation marks (or other method, such as indentation) followed by an appropriate citation that denotes an entry in the bibliography. If an electronic source is cited, the date of access must be indicated. Candidates are not expected to show faultless expertise in referencing, but are expected to demonstrate that all sources have been acknowledged. Candidates must be advised that audio-visual material, text, graphs, images and/or data published in print or in electronic sources that is not their own must also attribute the source. Again, an appropriate style of referencing/citation must be used.

### Inclusive assessment arrangements

Inclusive assessment arrangements are available for candidates with assessment access requirements. These arrangements enable candidates with diverse needs to access the examinations and demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of the constructs being assessed.

The IB document *Candidates with assessment access requirements* provides details on all the inclusive assessment arrangements available to candidates with learning support requirements. The IB document *Learning diversity within the International Baccalaureate programmes/Special educational needs within the International Baccalaureate programmes* outlines the position of the IB with regard to candidates with diverse learning needs in the IB programmes. For candidates affected by adverse circumstances, the IB documents *General regulations: Diploma Programme* and the *Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme* provide details on access consideration.

## Assessment outline—SL

### First assessment 2017

Assessment component	Weighting
<p><b>External assessment (3 hours)</b> Two written examination papers.</p> <p><b>Paper 1 (1 hour 15 minutes)</b> Three extended-response questions based on extracts from the topic 1 texts of the four political thinkers. All three questions to be answered. (30 marks).</p> <p><b>Paper 2 (1 hour 45 minutes)</b> The examination is divided into two sections, A and B. Section A: a compulsory extended response question based on two texts, linked to the topic 2 political concepts. Section B: three further essay-style questions based on the topic 2 political concepts. One question to be answered. (40 marks).</p>	<p><b>70%</b></p> <p><b>30%</b></p> <p><b>40%</b></p>
<p><b>Internal Assessment</b> Political investigation: a written report based on an investigation of a political issue of contemporary relevance, of the student's own choice. Internally assessed by the teacher and externally moderated.</p>	<p><b>30%</b></p>



## External assessment

The following method/methods are used to assess students.

- Detailed markschemes specific to each examination paper
- Markbands
- Assessment criteria

The markbands/assessment criteria are published in this guide.

For paper 1 and 2 there are markbands and markschemes. The markbands are related to the assessment objectives established for the political thought course and the group 3 grade descriptors. The markschemes are specific to each examination.

### External assessment details

#### Paper 1

**Duration: 1 hour 15 minutes**

**Weighting: 30%**

Three questions will be set on textual sources, which are extracted from the four prescribed texts. Candidates will be required to answer all three questions each of which carries a total of ten marks. The sources chosen will be based on key issues in the texts, as listed in Topic 1. The first two questions will ask candidates to explain the meaning and significance of an underlined phrase, sentence, or sentences in two of the sources. The third question requires a comparison/contrast of the other two sources.

#### Paper 2

**Duration: 1 hour 45 minutes**

**Weighting: 40%**

This paper consists of two sections, A and B.

**Section A:** two textual sources relating to the political concepts studied for Topic 2. These sources may be extracted from the works of political thinkers other than those prescribed in Topic 1, and/or from secondary commentaries.

**Section B:** three essay questions relating to the political concepts studied in Topic 2. Candidates should answer any one question.

Questions in both Section A and Section B will be marked out of 20, giving a final total for this paper of 40 marks.

## External assessment criteria—SL

### Markbands for Paper 1: Questions 1 and 2

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	There is only limited understanding of the meaning of the quoted text and no explanation of its significance in relation to the rest of the source.
3-4	There is satisfactory understanding of the meaning of the quoted text and a superficial explanation of its significance.
5-6	There is good understanding of the meaning of the quoted text and a satisfactory explanation of its significance in relation to the rest of the source.
7-8	There is very good understanding of the meaning of the quoted text. The wider significance is explained effectively in relation to the rest of the source.
9-10	There is excellent understanding of the meaning of the quoted text. The wider significance is explained effectively in relation to the rest of the source and the wider ideas of the thinker.

### Markbands for Paper 1: Question 3

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	There is only limited understanding of the question. The response consists of description of the content of the source texts, and/or general comments about the sources, rather than valid points of comparison or of contrast.
3-4	There is some understanding of the question. The response includes some limited points of comparison and/or contrast.
5-6	There is a satisfactory understanding of the question with some reference to the source texts and own knowledge. The response includes some valid points of comparison and of contrast, although these points lack clarity.
7-8	There is good understanding of the question with reference to the source texts and own knowledge. The response includes valid points of comparison and of contrast.
9-10	There is excellent understanding of the question with thorough reference to the source texts and own knowledge. The response includes clear and valid points of comparison and of contrast.

## External assessment markbands

### Assessment criteria/markbands for Paper 2

This paper has markband descriptors for three separate assessment criteria:

- A: Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)
- B: Analysis and Evaluation (10 marks)
- C: Organisation and Presentation (4 marks)

#### Markbands for Paper 2 Section A

There is one compulsory question in section A of paper 2, based on two stimulus texts (not from topic 1). It is not assumed that the candidate will have studied these texts.

#### A. Knowledge and Understanding

0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	Knowledge of political concepts and issues is limited and lacks accuracy and/or relevance. The response demonstrates little understanding of the source texts.
3-4	Knowledge of political concepts and issues is generally accurate and relevant. The response demonstrates a good understanding of the source texts.
5-6	Knowledge of political concepts and issues is detailed, accurate and relevant. The response demonstrates an excellent understanding of the source texts.

#### B. Analysis and Evaluation

0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	The response contains very little critical analysis, and consists mostly of generalizations and poorly substantiated assertions. There is no synthesis of own knowledge and source material.
3-4	The response includes some limited analysis but is primarily narrative/ descriptive in nature rather than analytical. There is little or no synthesis of own knowledge and source material.
5-6	There is some analysis and some awareness of different ideological perspectives. There is limited synthesis of own knowledge and source material.
7-8	The response includes analysis and evaluation, and demonstrates some awareness of different ideological perspectives. There is some synthesis of own knowledge and source material.
9-10	The response includes clear analysis and evaluation, and demonstrates awareness of different ideological perspectives. There is effective synthesis of own knowledge and source material.

### C. Organization and Presentation

0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	The response lacks clarity and coherence, with structural issues significantly impeding understanding. It demonstrates a limited understanding of the demands of the question.
3-4	The response is clear, coherent and effectively organised. It demonstrates a high level of awareness of the demands of the question.

### Markbands for Paper 2 Section B

#### A. Knowledge and Understanding

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	Knowledge of thinkers and concepts is limited and lacks accuracy and/or relevance. The response demonstrates little understanding of political issues.
3-4	Knowledge of thinkers and concepts generally accurate and relevant. The response demonstrates some understanding of political issues.
5-6	Knowledge of thinkers, concepts and issues is detailed, accurate and relevant. The response demonstrates clear understanding of political issues.

#### B. Analysis and Evaluation

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	The response contains very little critical analysis, and consists mostly of generalizations and poorly substantiated assertions. There is no awareness of different ideological perspectives.
3-4	The response includes some limited analysis but is primarily narrative/ descriptive in nature rather than analytical. There is little or no awareness of different ideological perspectives.
5-6	The response includes some analysis and evaluation. There is a limited awareness of different ideological perspectives.
7-8	The response includes analysis and evaluation. It demonstrates some awareness of different ideological perspectives.
9-10	The response includes well developed analysis and evaluation. It demonstrates clear awareness of different ideological perspectives.

### C. Organization and Presentation

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The response does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	The response lacks clarity and coherence, with structural issues significantly impeding understanding. It demonstrates a limited understanding of the demands of the question.
3-4	The response is clear, coherent and effectively organised. It demonstrates a high level of awareness of the demands of the question.

## Internal assessment

### Purpose of internal assessment

Internal assessment is an integral part of the course and is compulsory for students. It enables students to demonstrate the application of their skills and knowledge, and to pursue their personal interests, without the time limitations and other constraints that are associated with written examinations. The internal assessment should, as far as possible, be woven into normal classroom teaching and not be a separate activity conducted after a course has been taught.

In the political thought course, internal assessment allows candidates to demonstrate their political knowledge and skills and to pursue a topic of personal interest free from the time constraints of examination. The internal assessment in political thought is based on an investigation into a political issue of contemporary interest and relevance: as a guideline “contemporary” should refer to an issue of continuing relevance from no earlier than ten years before the investigation is undertaken. The teacher should give advice and guidance on appropriate sources and on the nature of the chosen topic.

Some examples of recent suitable topics for investigation, framed as research questions:

- Did France’s *Charlie Hebdo* cartoonists have a right to offend?
- Should Indonesia abolish the death penalty for drug-related crimes?
- Is the US Second Amendment a necessary personal right or an outdated threat to individual liberty?
- Should prisoners have the right to vote in general elections in the UK?
- Would a one-state or two-state solution in Israel-Palestine resolve the conflict more democratically?
- Could the US Ferguson Police Department’s alleged use of racial profiling be justified?
- Was Apple’s refusal to open the phone of Syed Farook justifiable on human rights grounds?
- Can the replacement of a democratic government in Italy by a technocratic government be justified?

### Time allocation

Internal assessment is an integral part of the political thought course, contributing 30% to the final assessment in the course. This weighting should be reflected in the time that is allocated to teaching the knowledge, skills and understanding required to undertake the work, as well as the total time allocated to carry out the work.

It is recommended that a total of approximately 30 hours of teaching time should be allocated to the work. This should include:

- time for the teacher to explain to students the requirements of the internal assessment
- class time for students to work on the internal assessment component and ask questions
- time for consultation between the teacher and each student
- time to review and monitor progress, and to check authenticity.

## Guidance and authenticity

The investigation submitted for internal assessment must be the student's own work. However, it is not the intention that students should decide upon a title or topic and be left to work on the internal assessment component without any further support from the teacher. The teacher should play an important role during both the planning stage and the period when the student is working on the internally assessed work. It is the responsibility of the teacher to ensure that students are familiar with:

- the requirements of the type of work to be internally assessed
- the assessment criteria; students must understand that the work submitted for assessment must address these criteria effectively.

Teachers and students must discuss the internally assessed work. Students should be encouraged to initiate discussions with the teacher to obtain advice and information, and students must not be penalized for seeking guidance. As part of the learning process, teachers should read and give advice to students on one draft of the work. The teacher should provide verbal or written advice on how the work could be improved, but not edit the draft. The next version handed to the teacher must be the final version for submission.

It is the responsibility of teachers to ensure that all students understand the basic meaning and significance of concepts that relate to academic honesty, especially authenticity and intellectual property. Teachers must ensure that all student work for assessment is prepared according to the requirements and must explain clearly to students that the internally assessed work must be entirely their own. Where collaboration between students is permitted, it must be clear to all students what the difference is between collaboration and collusion.

All work submitted to the IB for moderation or assessment must be authenticated by a teacher, and must not include any known instances of suspected or confirmed academic misconduct. Each student must confirm that the work is his or her authentic work and constitutes the final version of that work. Once a student has officially submitted the final version of the work it cannot be retracted. The requirement to confirm the authenticity of work applies to the work of all students, not just the sample work that will be submitted to the IB for the purpose of moderation. For further details refer to the IB publication *Academic honesty, The Diploma Programme: From principles into practice* and the relevant articles in *General regulations: Diploma Programme*.

Authenticity may be checked by discussion with the student on the content of the work, and scrutiny of one or more of the following:

- the student's initial proposal
- the first draft of the written work
- the references cited
- the style of writing compared with work known to be that of the student
- the analysis of the work by a web-based plagiarism detection service.

The same piece of work cannot be submitted to meet the requirements of both the internal assessment and an extended essay.

## Requirements and recommendations

The political thought investigation will provide students with the opportunity to explore links between political theory and a contemporary political issue. As part of this process students should be encouraged from an early stage in the course to identify articles in appropriate newspapers, journals and websites. The completed investigation should consist of a written account of no more than 1500 words.

<b>A. Identification and selection of political issue</b>	<b>Suggested maximum word limit</b>
An identification, and explanation for the selection, of the political issue	150
<b>B. Summary of Political Content</b>	
A summary of the material and political issues relevant to the investigation	550
<b>C. Critical Evaluation</b>	
A critical evaluation of the issues raised by the investigation	800
<b>D. Sources and Word Count</b>	
Appropriate referencing and list of sources used	Not included in word count

## Using assessment criteria for internal assessment

For internal assessment, a number of assessment criteria have been identified. Each assessment criterion has level descriptors describing specific achievement levels, together with an appropriate range of marks. The level descriptors concentrate on positive achievement, although for the lower levels failure to achieve may be included in the description.

Teachers must judge the internally assessed work against the criteria using the level descriptors.

The aim is to find, for each criterion, the descriptor that conveys most accurately the level attained by the student, using the best-fit model. A best-fit approach means that compensation should be made when a piece of work matches different aspects of a criterion at different levels. The mark awarded should be one that most fairly reflects the balance of achievement against the criterion. It is not necessary for every single aspect of a level descriptor to be met for that mark to be awarded.

When assessing a student's work, teachers should read the level descriptors for each criterion until they reach a descriptor that most appropriately describes the level of the work being assessed. If a piece of work seems to fall between two descriptors, both descriptors should be read again and the one that more appropriately describes the student's work should be chosen.



Where there are two or more marks available within a level, teachers should award the upper marks if the student's work demonstrates the qualities described to a great extent; the work may be close to achieving marks in the level above. Teachers should award the lower marks if the student's work demonstrates the qualities described to a lesser extent; the work may be close to achieving marks in the level below.

Only whole numbers should be recorded; partial marks, (fractions and decimals) are not acceptable.

Teachers should not think in terms of a pass or fail boundary, but should concentrate on identifying the appropriate descriptor for each assessment criterion.

The highest level descriptors do not imply faultless performance but should be achievable by a student. Teachers should not hesitate to use the extremes if they are appropriate descriptions of the work being assessed.

A student who attains a high achievement level in relation to one criterion will not necessarily attain high achievement levels in relation to the other criteria. Similarly, a student who attains a low achievement level for one criterion will not necessarily attain low achievement levels for the other criteria. Teachers should not assume that the overall assessment of the students will produce any particular distribution of marks.

It is recommended that the assessment criteria be made available to students.

## Internal assessment details

### Political thought investigation

Duration: 30 hours

Weighting: 30%

## Internal assessment criteria

### Assessment criteria for the written investigation

The internal assessment uses markband descriptors for four separate assessment criteria:

- Criterion A Identification and selection of political issue (3 marks)
- Criterion B Summary of political content (6 marks)
- Criterion C Critical thought (12 marks)
- Criterion D Presentation and organization (4 marks)

**25 marks total**

#### A. Identification and selection of political issue (3 marks)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1	The political issue is implicitly identified. There is a limited explanation of why this issue was selected.
2	The political issue is identified. There is some explanation of why this issue was selected.
3	The political issue is clearly identified. There is a clear explanation of why this issue was selected.

#### B. Summary of political content (6 marks)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	There summary of the political issue and relevant material is superficial and lacks accuracy. No link to political theory is established.
3-4	There is a satisfactory summary of the political issue and relevant material. A link to political theory is established.
5-6	There is a clear, accurate summary of the political issue and relevant material. A clear and effective link to political theory is established.

### C. Critical Thought (12 marks)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-3	The response contains little or no critical analysis, and consists mostly of generalizations and poorly substantiated assertions. There is little or no recognition of the importance of the material in the context of political theory.
4-6	The response includes some analysis but is primarily narrative/ descriptive in nature rather than analytical. There is limited recognition of the importance of the material in the context of political theory.
7-9	The response includes analysis and evaluation. There is some recognition of the importance of the material in the context of political theory.
10-12	The response includes well developed analysis and evaluation. It demonstrates clear recognition of the importance of the material in the context of political theory.

### D. Presentation and organization (4 marks)

Marks	Level descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below.
1-2	The response lacks clarity and coherence, with structural issues significantly impeding understanding. It demonstrates a limited understanding of the demands of the task.
3-4	The response is clear, coherent and effectively organized. It demonstrates a high level of awareness of the demands of the task.

## Approaches to teaching and approaches to learning in DP political thought

Approaches to teaching and learning (ATL) in the Diploma Programme refer to deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes that permeate the teaching and learning environment. These approaches and tools are intrinsically linked with the IB learner profile attributes, enhance student learning and assist student preparation for the Diploma Programme assessment and beyond.

The five approaches to learning (developing thinking skills, social skills, communication skills, self-management skills and research skills) along with the six approaches to teaching (teaching that is inquiry-based, conceptually focused, contextualized, collaborative, differentiated and informed by assessment) encompass the key values and principles that underpin IB pedagogy. A suite of materials on approaches to teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme is available on the OCC. The guidance given below builds on these resources.

### Teaching based on inquiry

The idea behind inquiry-based teaching in IB programmes is to develop students' natural curiosity together with the skills of self-management, thinking, research and collaborative learning so that they can become motivated and autonomous life-long learners.

The most significant aspect of inquiry-based teaching is that students are actively engaged in their own learning, constructing their own understandings of interesting issues and phenomena. In a classroom where inquiry-based teaching is happening, there is much interaction between students and between them and the teacher. The teacher's primary role in such a setting is to promote questions and to facilitate the learning process. Students have a degree of freedom to make decisions about how to proceed in their learning process, which most often progresses from the concrete towards the abstract. Examples of forms of inquiry-based teaching include structured inquiry, open inquiry, experiential learning, problem-based learning and case-based learning.

### Teaching focused on conceptual understanding

An important motivation for conceptually focussed teaching in IB programmes is to help students build the ability to engage with significant ideas about human beings and the world. Equally valuably, discussion of the "big ideas" behind a topic can help students get to the heart of **why** they are learning what they are learning.

To appreciate the role of concepts in building lasting and significant understandings, it is helpful to think of concepts as the building blocks of students' cognitive frameworks. When they are learning at a conceptual level, students are integrating new knowledge into their existing understandings. They see how seemingly discrete topics are connected and are ready to transfer their learning to new contexts. A subject emerges for them in a holistic light. In a classroom where conceptually-focused teaching is happening, there is continuous movement between facts and what they mean, with students being used to ask why the facts matter as a natural part of their learning process.

## Glossary of command terms

### Command terms for political thought

Students should be familiar with the following key terms and phrases used in examination questions, which are to be understood as described below. Although these terms will be used frequently in examination questions, other terms may be used to direct students to present an argument in a specific way.

Command term	Assessment objective level	Definition
Analyse	AO2	Break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure.
Compare	AO3	Give an account of the similarities between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Compare and contrast	AO3	Give an account of similarities and differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Contrast	AO3	Give an account of the differences between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout.
Discuss	AO3	Offer a considered and balanced review that includes a range of arguments, factors or hypotheses. Opinions or conclusions should be presented clearly and supported by appropriate evidence.
Distinguish	AO2	Make clear the differences between two or more concepts or items.
Evaluate	AO3	Make an appraisal by weighing up the strengths and limitations.
Examine	AO3	Consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue.
Explain	AO2	Give a detailed account including reasons or causes.
Justify	AO3	Give valid reasons or evidence to support an answer or conclusion.
Suggest	AO2	Propose a solution, hypothesis or other possible answer.
To what extent	AO3	Consider the merits or otherwise of an argument or concept. Opinions and conclusions should be presented clearly and supported with appropriate evidence and sound argument.