

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme Subject Brief

Individuals and societies:

Business management—Higher level

First assessments 2016 – Last assessments 2022

The IB Diploma Programme (DP) is a rigorous, academically challenging and balanced programme of education designed to prepare students aged 16 to 19 for success at university and life beyond. The DP aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable, inquiring, caring and compassionate, and to develop intercultural understanding, open-mindedness and the attitudes necessary to respect and evaluate a range of viewpoints. Approaches to teaching and learning (ATL) within the DP are deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes that permeate the teaching and learning environment. In the DP students develop skills from five ATL categories: thinking, research, social, self-management and communication.

To ensure both breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, students must choose at least one subject from five groups: 1) their best language, 2) additional language(s), 3) social sciences, 4) experimental sciences, and 5) mathematics. Students may choose either an arts subject from group 6, or a second subject from groups 1 to 5. At least three and not more than four subjects are taken at higher level (240 recommended teaching hours), while the remaining are taken at standard level (150 recommended teaching hours). In addition, three core elements—the extended essay, theory of knowledge and creativity, action, service—are compulsory and central to the philosophy of the programme.

These IB DP subject briefs illustrate four key course components.

- I. Course description and aims
- II. Curriculum model overview



- III. Assessment model
- IV. Sample questions

I. Course description and aims

The business management course is designed to develop students' knowledge and understanding of business management theories, as well as their ability to apply a range of tools and techniques. Students learn to analyse, discuss and evaluate business activities at local, national and international levels. The course covers a range of organizations from all sectors, as well as the sociocultural and economic contexts in which those organizations operate.

The course covers the key characteristics of business organization and environment, and the business functions of human resource management, finance and accounts, marketing and operations management. Links between the topics are central to the course. Through the exploration of six underpinning concepts (change, culture, ethics, globalization, innovation and strategy), the course allows students to develop a holistic understanding of today's complex and dynamic business environment. The conceptual learning is firmly anchored in business management theories, tools and techniques and placed in the context of real world examples and case studies.

The course encourages the appreciation of ethical concerns at both a local and global level. It aims to develop relevant and transferable skills, including the ability to: think critically; make ethically sound and well-informed decisions; appreciate the pace, nature and significance of change; think strategically; and undertake long-term planning, analysis and evaluation. The course also develops subject-specific skills, such as financial analysis.

The aims of the business management course at HL and SL are to:

1. encourage a holistic view of the world of business
2. empower students to think critically and strategically about individual and organizational behaviour
3. promote the importance of exploring business issues from different cultural perspectives
4. enable the student to appreciate the nature and significance of change in a local, regional and global context
5. promote awareness of the importance of environmental, social and ethical factors in the actions of individuals and organizations
6. develop an understanding of the importance of innovation in a business environment.

II. Curriculum model overview

| Component | Recommended teaching hours |
|--|----------------------------|
| Unit 1: Business organization and environment | 50 |
| 1.1 Introduction to business management | |
| 1.2 Types of organizations | |
| 1.3 Organizational objectives | |
| 1.4 Stakeholders | |
| 1.5 External environment | |
| 1.6 Growth and evolution | |
| 1.7 Organizational planning tools | |

| | |
|--|-----------|
| Unit 2: Human resource management 2.1 Functions and evolution of human resource management 2.2 Organizational structure 2.3 Leadership and management 2.4 Motivation 2.5 Organizational (corporate) culture 2.6 Industrial/employee relations | 30 |
| Unit 3: Finance and accounts 3.1 Sources of finance 3.2 Costs and revenues 3.3 Break-even analysis 3.4 Final accounts 3.5 Profitability and liquidity ratio analysis 3.6 Efficiency ratio analysis 3.7 Cash flow 3.8 Investment appraisal 3.9 Budgets | 50 |
| Unit 4: Marketing 4.1 The role of marketing 4.2 Marketing planning (including introduction to the four Ps) 4.3 Sales forecasting 4.4 Market research 4.5 The four Ps (product, price, promotion, place) 4.6 The extended marketing mix of seven Ps 4.7 International marketing 4.8 E-commerce | 50 |
| Unit 5: Operations management 5.1 The role of operations management 5.2 Production methods 5.3 Lean production and quality management 5.4 Location 5.5 Production planning 5.6 Research and development 5.7 Crisis management and contingency planning | 30 |
| Internal assessment | 30 |

III. Assessment model

By the end of the business management HL course, students are expected to reach the following assessment objectives.

- Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of:
 - the business management tools, techniques and theories specified in the syllabus content
 - the six concepts that underpin the subject
 - real-world business problems, issues and decisions
 - the HL extension topics.

- Demonstrate application and analysis of:
 - knowledge and skills to a variety of real-world and fictional business situations
 - business decisions by explaining the issue(s) at stake, selecting and interpreting data, and applying appropriate tools, techniques, theories and concepts
 - the HL extension topics.
- Demonstrate synthesis and evaluation of:
 - business strategies and practices, showing evidence of critical thinking
 - business decisions, formulating recommendations
 - the HL extension topics.
- Demonstrate a variety of appropriate skills to:
 - produce well-structured written material using business terminology
 - select and use quantitative and qualitative business tools, techniques and methods
 - select and use business material, from a range of primary and secondary sources.

Assessment at a glance

| Type of assessment | Format of assessment | Time (hours) | Weighting of final grade (%) |
|--------------------|--|--------------|------------------------------|
| External | | 4.5 | 75 |
| Paper 1 | Structured and extended response questions | 2.25 | 35 |
| Paper 2 | Structured and extended response questions | 2.25 | 40 |
| Internal | | 30 | 25 |
| Research project | Students research and report on an issue facing an organization or a decision to be made by an organization (or several organizations). Maximum 2,000 words. | 30 | 25 |

IV. Sample questions

- Analyse the appropriateness of a cost-plus pricing strategy for B-Pharma's drugs.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of the democratic leadership style of the partners at Hands.
- With reference to one or two organization(s) that you have studied, discuss how marketing strategies may differ in two cultures that you are familiar with.

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Complete subject guides can be accessed through the IB online curriculum centre (OCC) or purchased through the IB store: <http://store.ibo.org>.

For more on how the DP prepares students for success at university, visit: www.ibo.org/recognition or email: recognition@ibo.org.