



WELLINGTON  
COLLEGE



THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE  
AT WELLINGTON COLLEGE  
AGES 13–16 MYP  
AGES 16–18 DIPLOMA

## INTRODUCTION BY THE MASTER



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**F**OR MOST CHILDREN IN THIS COUNTRY EDUCATION HAS BECOME A UTILITARIAN TREADMILL OF TESTS AND PUBLIC EXAMINATIONS. Schools are evaluated solely by their academic results. Assessment has come to determine the curriculum, and right and wrong answers—facts—have come to dominate exams. For most pupils and parents there is no choice and no escape from the restrictions of the National Curriculum and the drumbeat of GCSEs and A Levels.

Wellington College is now offering a real and liberating alternative. From September 2009 we are going to provide the International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (IB MYP) to all of our pupils, 13–16. The Third Form (13 year olds) will follow an IB course which will prepare them for GCSEs within the IB MYP in the Fourth and Fifth Forms (14–16 year olds). In the Sixth Form our pupils will be offered the IB Diploma Programme or a rich choice of A Levels.

We believe that the IB provides pupils with excellent preparation for pupils for universities and for the world they will go on to shape. We need to educate minds as well as teach facts; we need to develop thinking skills rather than just teach to exam requirements. Graduates of Wellington College will be competing in an increasingly global market place. Thus, working in partnership with the internationally respected International Baccalaureate Organisation, we will offer a curriculum that suits all of our pupils: it will be innovative, it will stretch and challenge, but it will also instil deep within each boy and girl the values that parents have come to treasure at Wellington College. All pupils will derive real and enriching benefits from being part of an IB World School.



## A changing curriculum for a changing world

**F**rom this September all of the pupils entering our Third Form will study for the IB MYP. The curriculum, tailored by Wellington College's staff to meet the aspirations of an increasingly academically gifted intake, is varied and stimulating, offering rich breadth and depth. It will provide an excellent transition between prep schools and the middle years at Wellington, whilst developing strong cross-curricular links and study skills.

Within the programme, all pupils will do a minimum of two IGCSEs (Maths and English) while those with specialist interests or who prefer a more traditional GCSE approach may do additional GCSEs (up to 9 in total) within the MYP curriculum framework.

Those choosing the MYP (with IGCSE Maths and English only) would gain the breadth, balance, cross-curricular links, personal project, school-based courses and other advantages of the MYP. They would thus gain a full MYP certificate in all of their subjects plus IGCSEs in Maths and English.

We recognise, however, that there will be some who would prefer to choose a GCSE course and they will be able to do this within an MYP framework. They will be given the opportunity to gain up to nine GCSEs with certification in MYP subjects. Obviously the more GCSEs a pupil does, the more diluted their MYP course; we believe that quite quickly, the overwhelming majority, and perhaps all, of Wellington's pupils will opt for the full IB MYP at the end of the Third Form.

# The IB Middle Years Programme

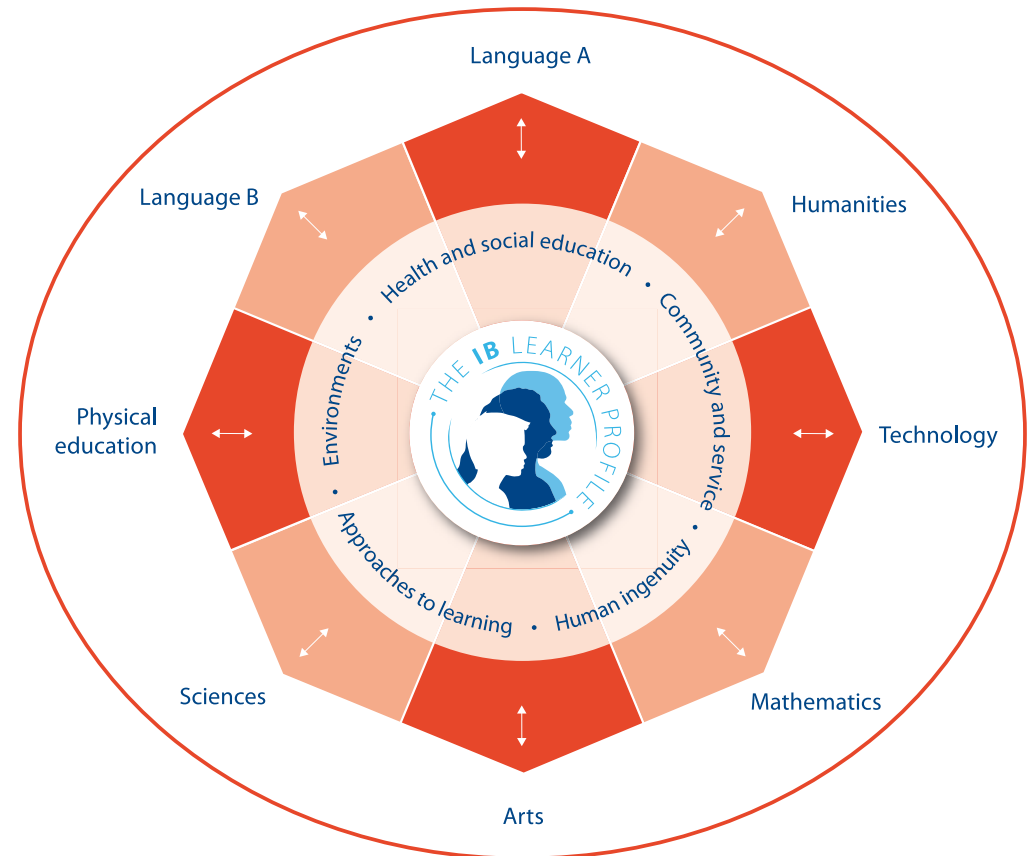
**T**he IB MYP is an international qualification for pupils aged 13 to 16, with a proven international reputation for excellence and for admission to university. It is offered by the International Baccalaureate Organisation, which also provides the IB Diploma Programme that Wellington runs alongside A Levels in the Sixth Form.

The MYP offers:

- A broad and balanced curriculum structure based on the octagonal diagram opposite
- The opportunity to design our own course content and forms of assessment
- External moderation and certification of our pupils' work
- Internationally recognised grading for university entry
- The IBO's values: internationalism, interdisciplinarity, social awareness
- Certification of grades by an educational organisation which is universally respected and free of government interference.

All pupils must meet minimum requirements in each of the eight areas below, though within areas like the humanities, languages, sciences and the arts, they may take several subjects, ensuring breadth while allowing specialisation.

We envisage continuing to offer all current subjects and we have devised timetable models that would satisfy the IB requirements while preserving and enhancing the range and flexibility of our current GCSE option choice provision. Each course will be planned collaboratively and



linked through the IB's Areas of Interaction. So, for example, key concepts found in History can be shared in Science, allowing pupils to have their learning reinforced in different contexts. They will make connections, establish patterns, and learn that education does not exist in self-contained modules: understanding should flow between subjects.

In addition, we will continue to run our Well-being programme and have begun planning for a new Wellington-based course which introduces pupils to the history of thought, philosophy, art, politics, and science through practical problem solving and critical thinking. The Harkness method of teaching, now standard in many Sixth Form subjects, will be introduced to our younger pupils, providing them with the opportunity to benefit from more enquiry-based learning.

The crucial difference between GCSEs and the MYP is that the former imposes course content and external assessment, while the latter leaves schools free to determine their own course content and means of assessment. School programmes are monitored by the IBO and internal assessment is moderated against that of all schools around the world offering the MYP, giving pupils recognised grades in each subject at the end of their programme. Quite simply: the IBO trusts the schools to provide courses which suit their needs, but the organisation also ensures that standards are maintained.

*The pupils at Wellington enjoy their lessons*



A Harkness 'table' (oval table where pupils take responsibility for their own learning) in an economics lesson. Spot the teacher (he's the one looking puzzled).



## Learning is more than just knowing

**S**o, why follow the IB MYP? Unlike GCSEs, the MYP is highly adaptable, allowing schools like Wellington to design their own courses with stimulating and differentiated content to suit their own pupils' aptitudes and interests. Schools are also able to assess pupils in

varied ways and at different stages rather than having to push them through a one-size-fits-all examination process that encourages teaching to the test. It allows the Wellington community (staff, pupils, and parents) to design a middle school curriculum which works for us and which best prepares our pupils for life in the Sixth Form and beyond. It will be academically rigorous, and, importantly, at the end of the Fifth Form our pupils' work will be moderated and certified, using clear and transparent criteria provided by the IBO, providing each pupil with a truly world-class qualification.

Pupils will still be taught 'traditional' subjects, and each will contain essential 'building blocks' of knowledge. But the approaches to teaching

and learning will be new: teachers from different disciplines will plan courses together, assessment will be continuous and formative, enabling us to be more sophisticated and sensitive in measuring our pupils' progress; for those doing predominantly the MYP programme there will be significantly fewer final examinations, allowing us to gain valuable teaching time to develop real and lasting understanding. And each pupil will engage in open-ended, problem-solving activities, investigations, organized debates, hands-on experimentation, peer learning, analysis and reflection, orals, and essays: a rich mix of experiences for an increasingly diverse age.

At the heart of the MYP there is a commitment to understanding, rather than simple learning. To understand the most complex real-life issues we also need to explore the connection between subjects. At Wellington we believe that in the future the ability to think critically, to question the wealth of information available, to be adaptable to a range of shifting circumstances, will be the mark of a 'good' education. The IB MYP allows Wellington to do just that: we will instil in our pupils a greater desire to learn and inquire, and to reflect on how they learn.



## The IB and Wellington: a world class education

**T**he IB organisation is the market leader in providing high-quality internationally-recognised qualifications. It has three programmes of study:

- *The Diploma Programme*  
Available to 16–19 year olds; running in 1,857 schools
- *The Middle Years Programme*  
Available to 11–16 year olds; running in 679 schools.
- *The Primary Years Programme*  
Available to 3–12 year olds; running in 491 schools

The growth in all three programmes is rapid and continuing: the number of schools offering IB programmes will rise to 10,000 within twelve years. The IBO brand is strong and its reputation assured; growth in all three programmes is particularly significant in the United Kingdom, with a growing number of independent schools offering one or more of its programmes. This growth is matched in the state sector. Additionally, and importantly, its academic standards are set very high and it has experienced zero grade inflation.

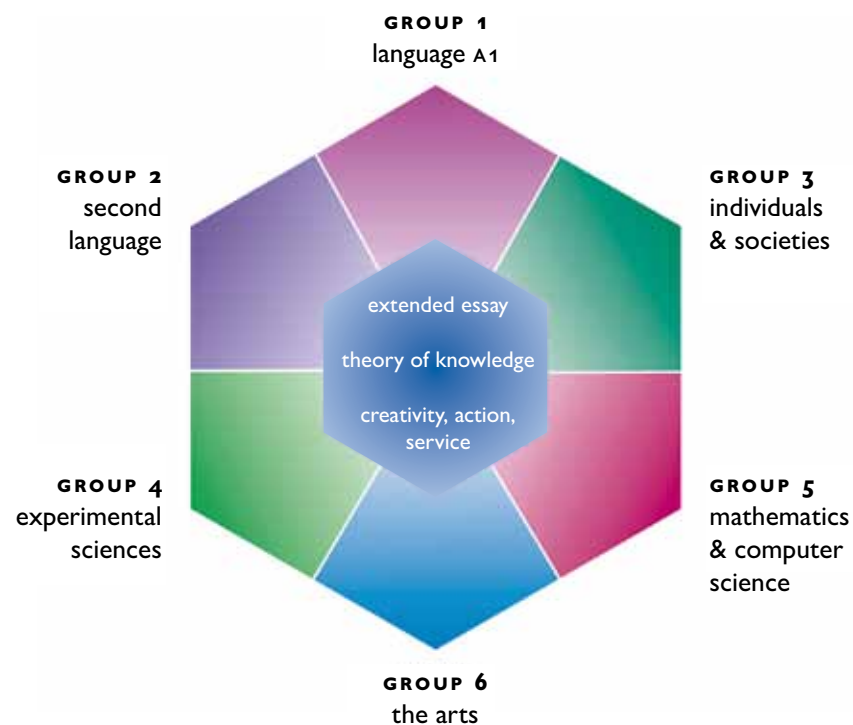
Wellington College started offering the IB Diploma in 2008, and with real success: 25% of its Lower Sixth pupils opted to do it, and numbers are growing. It offers breadth (each pupil does six subjects, plus a core which includes an extended essay and a critical thinking course) and depth (within the six subjects three are taken at higher level). Emphasis is placed

on independent learning, with final examinations at the end of the Upper Sixth, just like the old, pre-modular A-Level.

The IB Diploma and the MYP share a common philosophy: that pupils should be inquirers, open minded, knowledgeable; they should be risk-takers, communicators; and they should also be caring, reflective, principled thinkers. Such qualities are embedded in the curriculum and promoted in every area of school life.

Above all, the students who study an IB programme gain a balanced, holistic education which future-proofs them in a world which is undergoing rapid change.

The IB diploma



# Frequently Asked Questions

## WHAT DO UNIVERSITIES THINK OF THE MYP ?

The MYP provides pupils with a qualification that is recognised by British and international universities as being of a standard at least equivalent to GCSEs. We have polled dozens of universities and colleges, including all members of the Russell Group of Universities and all higher education institutions to which Wellingtonians have gone on to in recent years. All who have responded say that they are familiar with the MYP and that they have established procedures for making offers to pupils who present with qualifications other than GCSEs. Pupils will not be disadvantaged and some universities have expressed preference for the academic values of the MYP.

**Dr Geoff Parks, Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Cambridge University:** *“I would have thought that the proposed changes must be to the benefit of your pupils educationally and that should then benefit them in their university applications. It seems clear that for many pupils the current standard educational provision in years 9–11 is decidedly uninteresting, uninspiring and unchallenging and your proposal should provide a much more engaging, stimulating, stretching and generally satisfactory experience”.*

**Mike Nicholson, Director of Undergraduate Admissions at Oxford University:** *“Candidates who wish to be stretched should, in my view, take the MYP. The rigour and work ethic it encourages will assist them strongly if they wish to progress to a degree that will require them to really engage with their subject discipline”.*

**Professor Howard Gardner, Harvard University, the leading educational psychologist in the world:** *“The more that I learn about the IB, the more impressed I am with the dedication and forward-thinking of its leadership. Spurning the consensual wisdom (which is, all too often, the consensual folly) of state ministers of education, the IB builds on the most important knowledge, wisdom, and ways of knowing from the past; engages seriously with the trends, promises, and tribulations of the 21st century; and, most importantly, ponders how we might achieve the kind of world in which we would all like to live—sane, peaceful, sustainable. Instead of posing the question “How much more knowledge can we test for?” the IB asks “To what ends shall we put our knowledge?”*

#### **HOW IS THE MYP ASSESSED ?**

Assessment is continuous and school-based using a wide variety of formative and summative techniques, including presentations, assignments, projects, practical experiments, tests, examinations, and so on. Final results are awarded by the end of the Fifth Form and pupils’ portfolios are moderated externally by the IBO. Pupils then receive MYP certification of their results in each subject. Results are graded from 1 to 7 (with 7 being the highest grade) and are recognised by universities in the UK and abroad.

#### **WHY DOES WELLINGTON WANT TO ADOPT THE MYP ?**

There has been much academic change at Wellington in recent years: the Sixth Form curriculum has altered dramatically with the introduction of new A Levels and the IB Diploma, our expectations have risen, the shape of the timetable has changed, the ways in which we teach have become more varied, the ability levels of our pupil intake have risen sharply, and our results at all levels have improved substantially. The government’s new GCSEs, which are being introduced nationwide from September 2009,

have some strengths, but their content is heavily prescriptive, they are too focused on examinations, and subjects are too separate from each other. GCSEs encourage teaching to exams rather than learning to learn.

Our new curriculum would be designed to ensure pupils have a solid core of knowledge and skills, but also to

- stimulate curiosity and challenge increasingly capable pupils
- provide more opportunities for accelerated, independent and extended learning
- integrate the curriculum, both vertically and horizontally, linking years and subjects
- teach pupils how to learn and to see their education holistically
- relieve the pressure of externally imposed assessments and examinations
- provide better intellectual preparation for both A Levels and the IB in the Sixth Form

#### **IS WELLINGTON GOING FULL IB ?**

No. Wellington is proud to offer the IB Diploma alongside A Levels in the Sixth Form and we intend to continue running both for the foreseeable future. We know that every pupil has individual aptitudes and interests, and we take great care to help all pupils choose the pathway and subjects that suit them best. We feel that the flexibility of the MYP will better suit our pupil-centred ethos and will better prepare our pupils for senior study, whichever route they take.

#### **WHY CHANGE NOW ?**

The current presumption that pupils should present large numbers of GCSEs to universities is dissolving as confidence in the new GCSEs to be launched nationally in September 2009 is eroded by critical announcements

by a number of high profile schools recently. As the educational landscape changes we believe that it is therefore prudent to offer an attractive, credible and educationally rigorous alternative. Of the current alternatives to GCSEs, Wellington favours the values, flexibility and established academic record of the IB Organisation and the MYP.

#### **WHEN WOULD CHOICES HAVE TO BE MADE ?**

Families would choose their MYP/GCSE mix at Easter time in the Third Form, which is the time at which pupils currently choose their GCSE subject options. The first cohort will choose in March 2010.

#### **WHAT DO PREP SCHOOLS THINK ?**

The heads of prep schools we have consulted have been enthusiastic about the change. Comments we have received include:

*“I am delighted that Wellington is taking the imaginative and creative step of taking the MYP as well as IGCSEs. In my view this can only enhance the learning experience of all the pupils.”*

John Baugh, The Dragon School

*“MYP is an excellent course and I applaud Wellington for replacing a stultifyingly boring examination with it.”*

Richard Foster, Windlesham House

*“GCSEs are widely acknowledged to be failing our most able pupils. I welcome Wellington’s move to offer the IB Middle Years Programme as a stimulating alternative at the age of 14 and have little doubt that where Wellington leads, others will follow.”*

Ben Thomas, Thomas’s Prep Schools

*“All the St George’s parents who attended the recent information evening on*

*MYP returned enthused and greatly excited. We strongly support Wellington on taking this initiative, and feel sure it will be of great benefit to our pupils.”*

Roger Jones, St George’s, Windsor

*‘MYP? Heavens this could be dangerous! A generation of boys and girls encouraged to think for themselves, to be creative, to problem solve, to work together, to view themselves as part of the world not as the centre of it.’*

Nigel Taylor, Amesbury School

*“This is an exciting and innovative development from Wellington which I am sure will be of great interest to prep school parents.”*

Mark Johnson, Cheam School

#### **WHAT DO PARENTS THINK ?**

Parental views expressed to date have been very positive. After receiving a positive response from parents to an initial survey, we invited all 2009 and 2010 intake parents to attend either of two presentations on the MYP in January. Parents were surveyed after the events, and of the parents who are sending their children to Wellington in 2009 97% were positive about the MYP; of those sending children to us in 2010 100% were positive.

#### **WHAT DOES BUSINESS THINK ?**

We have extensively polled businesses about the MYP and again their response was overwhelmingly positive, not the least because of its emphasis on thinking skills and individual initiative. Sir Michael Rake, Chairman of the UK Commission for Employment and Skills and BT Group, says:

*“The IB diploma and MYP offer a different and modern approach to the traditional diet of A Levels and GCSEs and I welcome the initiative by Wellington College. I believe that A Levels are too specialised for today’s employment, and GCSEs also don’t provide the right preparation, whereas IB and MYP offer a broader range of skills and encourage children to think for themselves.”*

*“Schools should be joyful and delightful places, full of curiosity, stimulus, enrichment. Our aim, with these powerful curriculum changes, and the choices we are now offering at 13–16 and 16–18 is to help Wellington College become exactly what schools should be.”*

*Dr Anthony Seldon, Master*

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