



IB PHILOSOPHY

Higher and Standard Level

The emphasis of IB Philosophy is on doing philosophy. Students engage in their own reflection on central philosophical issues using a wide range of sources from philosophical texts to films and novels. A historical approach to philosophy is discouraged and the purpose is to encourage the student's own thinking. Candidates are expected to express their ideas clearly and coherently, using the appropriate philosophical language. They will learn to develop and evaluate philosophical ideas and arguments and analyse a variety of texts and examples. IBO Philosophy at both Higher and Standard Level is assessed by written papers and one piece of coursework.

Paper One – Philosophical Themes

Both Higher and Standard Level students study the Core Theme, 'What is a 'Human Being?'' which covers issues such as freedom and determinism, the relationship between mind and body and whether animals or machines could be persons. Higher and Standard Level students also study the additional Theme 'Theories and Problems of Ethics'. This looks at theories such as utilitarianism, deontological approaches and virtue ethics as well as biomedical issues, environmental issues and animal rights. Pupils taking IBO Philosophy at Higher Level also study the additional Theme, 'Philosophy of Religion'. Areas of study include arguments for the existence of God, the problem of evil, religious experience, science and religion and the post- modern view of faith.

Paper Two – Prescribed Text

In addition to the Themes paper candidates also study a prescribed texts. The study of classical philosophical texts allows students to broaden their knowledge and understanding of philosophy and engage critically with the arguments presented. The current text for study is *On Liberty* by John Stuart Mill.

Paper Three – Unseen Text

For Higher Level candidates only, this paper consists of an unseen text on the nature, function and meaning of philosophical activity to which students are required to write a response. The paper allows students to demonstrate their understanding of what philosophy means through a holistic application of knowledge, skills and ideas developed through the course

Coursework

Coursework consists of one 1200 – 1600 word exercise.

- A critical philosophical analysis of non-philosophical material such as a film, poem or work of art.