I. Course description and aims

The MYP individuals and societies subject group incorporates disciplines traditionally studied under humanities and social sciences. This subject group encourages learners to respect and understand the world around them, and equips them with the necessary skills to inquire into historical, geographical, political, social, economic, and cultural factors that affect individuals, societies and environments.

The study of individuals and societies helps students to appreciate critically the diversity of human culture, attitudes and beliefs. Courses in this subject group are important for helping students to recognize that both content and methodology can be debatable and controversial, and for practising the tolerance of uncertainty.

The IB’s approach to this subject area includes a strong focus on inquiry and investigation. Students collect, describe and analyse data; test hypotheses; and learn how to interpret increasingly complex information, including original source material. This focus on real-world examples, research and analysis is an essential aspect of the subject group.

The aims of MYP individuals and societies are to encourage and enable students to:

• appreciate human and environmental commonalities and diversity
• understand the interactions and interdependence of individuals, societies and the environment
• understand how both environmental and human systems operate and evolve
• identify and develop concern for the well-being of human communities and the natural environment
• act as responsible citizens of local and global communities
• develop inquiry skills that lead towards conceptual understandings of the relationships between individuals, societies and the environments in which they live.

II. Curriculum overview

For MYP individuals and societies, schools develop courses in integrated humanities, history, economics, geography, philosophy, sociology/anthropology, business management, psychology, and world religions.

The MYP promotes inquiry in these subjects by developing conceptual understanding within global contexts.

Key concepts such as change, global interactions, time, place and space, and systems broadly frame the MYP curriculum.

Related concepts promote deeper learning grounded in specific disciplines. Examples of related concepts in MYP individual and societies include causality, globalization, culture and sustainability.

Students explore key and related concepts through MYP global contexts.

• Identities and relationships
• Orientation in space and time
• Personal and cultural expression
• Scientific and technical innovation
• Globalization and sustainability
• Fairness and development

The MYP curriculum framework offers schools flexibility to determine...
engaging, relevant, challenging and significant content that meets local
and national curriculum requirements. This inquiry-based curriculum
explores factual, conceptual and debatable questions in the study of
individuals and societies.

The MYP requires at least 50 hours of teaching time for each subject
area in each year of the programme. For students participating in MYP
eAssessment, the IB recommends 70 hours of guided learning each
year in MYP years 4 and 5.

III. Assessment criteria

Each individuals and societies objective corresponds to one of four
equally weighted assessment criteria. Each criterion has eight possible
achievement levels (1–8), divided into four bands with unique descrip-
tors that teachers use to make judgments about students’ work.

Criterion A: Knowing and understanding
Students develop factual and conceptual knowledge about individuals and
societies.

Criterion B: Investigating
Students develop systematic research skills and processes associated with
disciplines in the humanities and social sciences. Students develop suc-
cessful strategies for investigating independently and in collaboration with
others.

Criterion C: Communicating
Students develop skills to organize, document and communicate their
learning using a variety of media and presentation formats.

Criterion D: Thinking critically
Students use critical-thinking skills to develop and apply their understand-
ing of individuals and societies and the process of investigation.

IV. MYP eAssessment

Students seeking IB MYP course results or the IB MYP certificate must
demonstrate their achievement of the subject group’s objectives by
completing an end-of-course on-screen examination. On-screen exam-
inations are formal external examinations, and are available in
history, geography and integrated humanities.

Topics explored in MYP individuals and societies on-screen examina-
tions include:
• demographics and human movements
• settlement and urban morphology
• superpowers, empires, and supra-national alliances and
organizations
• significant individuals
• warfare and peacekeeping
• rights and social protest
• trade, aid and exchange
• economic agents and their interests and role in the
economy: consumers, producers, governments, banks
• measurements and trends
• ecological relationships
• industrialization and technological developments.

Examination blueprints define the structure of tasks that simulate, repli-
cate and sample formative internal assessments. In MYP individuals and
societies courses, on-screen examinations comprise three tasks.

| Task Assessment criteria Marks |
|-------------------------------|------------------|
| Engagement with sources       | 30               |
| Investigation                 | 30               |
| Extended response             | 60               |

MYP individuals and societies on-screen examinations are aligned
with understanding and skills that prepare students for high levels of
achievement in IB Diploma Programme courses in
individuals and
societies.

Sample question (from history eAssessment)
The following questions relate to a range of written and rich media stim-
ulus material:

i. paragraph from a scholarly study of war and human conflict
ii. excerpt from a speech by a political leader in World War II (1943)
iii. graphical analysis of the causes of civil war in Liberia published by
iv. photograph of a cemetery from World War I
v. internet encyclopedia entry on the US Civil War (1861–1865)

• Using these sources, identify two causes and three consequences of conflict.
• Outline the purpose, values and limitations for sources (i) and (ii).
• “Individual people are the main cause of wars and conflicts.” To what extent
do you agree with this claim? Answer with reference to sources (i)–(v), as well as with reference to the
conflicts you have studied in MYP history.

About the IB: For over 45 years, the IB has built a reputation for high-quality, challenging programmes of education that develop internationally
minded young people who are well prepared for the challenges of life in the 21st century and are able to contribute to creating a better, more
peaceful world.

For further information on the IB Middle Years Programme, and a complete list of MYP subject briefs, visit: www.ibo.org/myp/.
Complete subject guides can be accessed through the IB online curriculum centre (OCC) or purchased through the IB store: http://store.ibo.org