



Guide for IB students applying to UK institutions

This guide provides a brief introduction to the UK higher education system and its application process, as well as information specifically relevant to IB students applying to UK institutions from outside of the UK.

The UK context

The UK includes the countries of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. There are more than 160 universities and colleges in the UK, offering a variety of options for students pursuing degrees in higher education. This guide provides information primarily for those applying to degree-granting universities. However, attending a degree-granting university, a listed body or pursuing a career after completing the IB Diploma Programme are all viable options.

Listed bodies

There are more than 700 colleges and other institutions known as “listed bodies” that do not grant degrees but offer courses that could lead to a degree at a degree-granting university. These listed bodies each have their own application system.

Degree length

The same government regulations and processes apply to all four countries in the UK, so the application process for universities and colleges is consistent throughout.

However, Scotland has a different system of education from the others, so there are important differences to note. Most degrees in the UK can be completed in three years, but Scottish courses of study typically take four years. A “sandwich year” is becoming more popular in UK universities, in which students spend one year (usually their third) in the workplace before returning to the university to finish their degrees.

Applying to UK universities

UCAS

The application process in the UK is typically done through the UK’s centralized admissions body, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS). Students fill out one form, upload a personal statement and include one reference. Their school should submit their IB predicted grades. Students then identify up to five courses to which they would like to apply (four in the case of clinical programmes such as medicine or dentistry). The five courses can be at five different universities, or students can apply to two or more courses at the same university.

Choosing an area of study

When applying to UK universities, students must indicate the specific course of study (also referred to as a subject) they are planning to pursue. The classes students take throughout their three or four years will be focused on this subject (for example, Psychology, Business Management, Biology, Design). If a student chooses to switch course, he or she will need to reapply and possibly restart his or her studies from the beginning. Thus, it is important for applicants to be clear about what they would like to study at the time of their university application. Some universities have the option to combine courses, such as Human Geography and French. Universities in Scotland tend to have a more liberal arts and flexible approach, allowing students to take classes outside of their course of study.

To search for courses of interest, students can use the “Find a course” section on the [UCAS website](#). It shows which courses are offered by different universities and allows students to find out more about the universities that interest them. The [Unistats website](#) can be used to compare courses offered at different universities. Many universities have requirements for specific Diploma Programme courses to be taken at higher level (HL); for example, most Engineering courses require mathematics and physics to be taken at HL. [The Russell Group](#) is also a good place to get information for choosing which subjects to take.

Entry requirements

Once students are ready to apply for particular courses, they can view the “entry requirements” listed on the [UCAS website](#) or on the individual university’s site. Each UCAS university listing provides information about why someone would study that course, the key skills and qualities the school looks for in applicants, where to obtain more information and what academic qualifications are needed. It also indicates the required points for the IB diploma in order to gain a conditional offer from the university, as well as any point requirements for specific subjects (usually higher level subjects). Offers are confirmed once final results are known.

Students should consider applying to a variety of undergraduate courses, including those whose entry require-

ments are slightly above their anticipated IB marks, as there might be some flexibility when it comes to final offers due to that year’s course cohort and the individual student’s profile. It is important to apply to courses whose entry requirements are lower than the student’s current standing as well, to ensure the best possible chance of receiving offers.

Individual institutions may have additional requirements, such as interviews or entrance exams. Students from non-English speaking backgrounds may also need to consider any language proficiency requirements set by the individual institutions.

UCAS Tariff points

The Tariff is a point system that UCAS uses to allow for comparisons to be made between students applying from a variety of programmes (including the IB). Not all qualifications are allocated Tariff points, and not all universities use the Tariff when evaluating applicants; nonetheless, it is a good idea for IB students to be familiar with the Tariff point system. Tariff points can be calculated based on individual IB scores as well as the total IB score, and conversion tables are available on the [Tariff page of the UCAS website](#).

After submitting the application

Students can stay up to date about their applications through the “Track” feature on the UCAS website. When a university has made a decision about a student’s application, it will be communicated through “Track,” and the student will also receive formal notice.

Gaining an offer

UK universities generally do not give outright acceptances; instead, they give students “offers” that are contingent upon the students fulfilling certain conditions. Conditions include a minimum number of points for IB diploma results, and some universities require a minimum score on specific IB subjects. A university might choose to decline an application rather than giving an offer. On occasions, a university might give a student an unconditional offer, meaning the student has been accepted to attend that university even before final scores are made available.

Accepting an offer

Once students have received a conditional decision from the courses to which they applied, they then respond to the offers. They must choose one course offer to be their “Firm” offer, indicating that it is their first choice, as well as one “Insurance” offer, in case they do not meet the minimum requirements of the Firm offer (understanding that the student will also need to meet the minimum requirements of the Insurance offer). All other offers must be declined. This can be a difficult decision, so students are advised to discuss this decision with their counsellor. Final offers are made after results are released.

Timeline

There is a [timeline on the UCAS website](#) that outlines the key dates for application. Most courses have a mid-January deadline for applying through UCAS. For offers communicated before March 31, students must reply by May 5. For offers communicated in May or June, students must reply by mid- to late-June. Once IB results are released in July, scores should be sent as soon as possible to determine whether conditional offers are satisfied or not.

Information for IB students

The IB diploma is widely known and accepted as a qualifying programme to attend university in the UK. Individual courses and universities typically have specific IB diploma and individual subject score requirements, so it is important to be aware of the requirements for the courses in which a student is interested. Given the specialized nature of UK undergraduate degrees, course selection and scores in higher level courses are important in the admissions process. Most programmes will set prerequisite scores for particular courses in addition to an overall points total.

The offers given by universities to IB applicants are based on final IB results. There is typically no advanced standing given to students based on their scores, although some Scottish programmes might offer advanced standing due to their programmes being four years.

Release of results

When IB results are released, the results are sent to the universities of their Firm and Insurance offers. Note that candidates must give permission to their school for their results to be released to UCAS and the universities. If permission is not given this will delay confirmation of their place. Depending on which requirements were met, the final decision will be made about which university the student will attend. IB students have an advantage in this

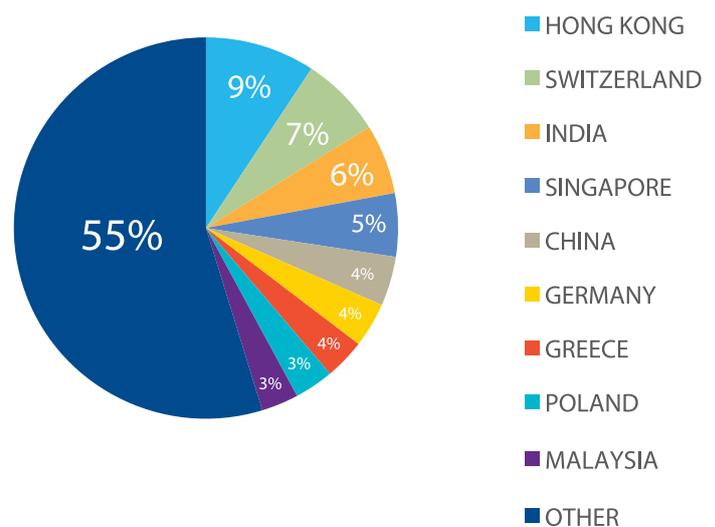
process, as IB results are released before A-Level results.

This past year, when IB results were released, UCAS began to advertise which courses still had places open for students who did not meet their offers. This process is known as “clearing”. If IB students do not fulfill the requirements for their offers or they do not like their offers, they can then turn to those courses that have open spaces before A-Level students receive their results.

Who sends transcripts to the UK?

In 2014, 9,761 students from schools in 125 countries outside of the UK requested to send, 14,567 transcripts to 252 UK institutions, including UCAS, an average of 1.5 transcripts per student. A total of 7,315 transcripts were sent to UCAS, meaning 7,252 (nearly half) were sent directly to the institutions.

Most common source of transcripts coming into the UK



Where do IB students send transcripts?

More than half of the transcripts sent to the UK go to the central admissions body, UCAS, but a large number are sent directly to the receiving institutions.

Twenty-four UK higher education institutions received 100 or more direct transcripts (44 received 50 or more), indicating a relatively wide diversity of student destinations. The 10 universities that received the most transcripts received just under one-third of all transcripts sent directly to UK universities and colleges (not including UCAS). All 10 of these ranked among the top 400 universities in the QS World University Ranking, and half of them rank among the top 50.¹

Information on the 10 institutions that received the most transcripts from international IB students²

| KING'S COLLEGE LONDON | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-----|
| General admissions information ³ | | |
| King's welcomes students from the UK and across the globe studying the IB diploma. Offers will usually specify certain marks in three subjects at HL (usually in the ranges of 766–665), in addition to an overall point score of 35 for the whole diploma. The point score includes points for theory of knowledge and the extended essay. Admissions requirements vary for each programme. | Total undergraduate enrollment ⁴ | 14k |
| | Overall acceptance rate ⁵ | 41% |
| | Global ranking ⁶ | 19 |
| | Average DP score ⁷ | 37 |
| Example course requirements | | |
| Business Management BSc: 35 points overall; three HL subjects at 766; at least one humanities or social science subject; plus mathematics and English language at GCSE grade B (or equivalent) | | |
| Additional considerations | | |
| http://www.kcl.ac.uk/study/ug/schoolscolleges/AdmissionsUpdates/revised-ib-offer.aspx | | |

| QUEEN MARY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----|
| General admissions information | | |
| The IB diploma satisfies the entrance requirements for all degree programmes. Specific grades, subjects and levels are listed under the entry requirements for each course. | Total undergraduate enrollment | 11k |
| | Overall acceptance rate | 59% |
| | Global ranking | 109 |
| | Average DP score | 34 |
| Example course requirements | | |
| Business Management BSc: 34 points overall; at least 6 in standard level (SL) English or 5 in HL English, and at least 4 in (any level of) mathematics | | |

| UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON | | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----|
| General admissions information | | |
| The standard minimum requirement for IB diploma students is 34 points overall, with a combined score of 16 achieved in three HL subjects with no grade lower than 5. However, many programmes have higher entry requirements than this. | Total undergraduate enrollment | 15k |
| | Overall acceptance rate | 44% |
| | Global ranking | 7 |
| | Average DP score | 38 |
| Example course requirements | | |
| Economics BSc: 39 points overall; a score of 19 points in three HL subjects including grade 7 in mathematics and grade 6 in economics if taken, with no score lower than 5 | | |

¹<http://www.topuniversities.com/qs-world-university-rankings>

²These institutions are listed in alphabetical order, and inclusion here does not necessarily indicate that these institutions have the most generous or appropriate offerings for IB students.

³Whenever possible, language taken directly from the university website.

⁴<http://www.topuniversities.com/universities>

⁵Based on 2013 intake data supplied by UCAS. This is the institutional accep-

tance rate and not specific to IB students.

⁶<http://www.topuniversities.com/qs-world-university-rankings>

⁷Based on all overseas full diploma transcripts sent directly to the institution by the IB in 2014. Not all students who send transcripts necessarily go on to enroll at the institution. Does not include retakes.

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

General admissions information

The IB diploma is welcomed at Bath for all of our courses. Typical offers require an overall point score of 36 (including bonus points) alongside specified grades in three subjects at HL, ranging from 766 to 655 depending on course. Many courses require specific subjects to be studied at HL, although some of our courses will accept a required subject at SL as an alternative.

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| Total undergraduate enrollment | 11k |
| Overall acceptance rate | 69% |
| Global ranking | 159 |
| Average DP score | 36 |

Example course requirements

Business Administration BSc (Hons): 36 points overall with 666 or 765 in three HL subjects.

Additional considerations

An IB diploma including English at SL or HL fulfils English language proficiency requirements.

UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH

General admissions information

Admissions requirements vary for each programme. IB diploma candidates are required to obtain the award of the diploma at a specific overall grade and to have achieved specific grades in three HL subjects.

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| Total undergraduate enrollment | 18k |
| Overall acceptance rate | 37% |
| Global ranking | 21 |
| Average DP score | 36 |

Example course requirements

Business and Economics MA: Award of diploma with 34 points overall and grades 655 in HL subjects including mathematics; SL: mathematics at 6 (if not taken at HL) and English at 4

Additional considerations

Unless a HL is specified in the stated entry requirements, a score of at least 4 is required in IB English SL.

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

General admissions information

The university recognizes the IB and its programme listings give full details of the grades and subjects required. Offers are usually based on the overall IB diploma grade but could also include achieving specific grades in specific subjects. IB diploma students must receive their diploma, as well as at least two HL subjects with a score of 4 or higher.

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| Total undergraduate enrollment | 15k |
| Overall acceptance rate | 80% |
| Global ranking | 161 |
| Average DP score | 35 |

Example course requirements

Economics BSc: 34–38 points overall

Additional considerations

SL grade 5 or HL grade 4 or above fulfills English language proficiency requirements.



UNIVERSITY OF KENT

General admissions information

The university welcomes applications from students offering the full IB diploma. Offers are made solely on the basis of the IB marking scheme and not the UCAS tariff. There is a standard IB diploma offer of 34 points across all programmes including any specific subjects at HL or SL required by the particular degree programme. As an alternative to achieving 34 points, for most programmes, the university will also make IB students the offer of passing the IB diploma with specific achievement in HL/SL subjects.

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| Total undergraduate enrollment | 15k |
| Overall acceptance rate | 82% |
| Global ranking | 360 |
| Average DP score | 32 |

Example course requirements

Business Administration BBA (Hons): 34 points overall, or 16 at HL including mathematics 4 at HL or SL

Additional considerations

Students offering a combination of IB certificates and other qualifications, such as the IB Career-related Programme, will also be considered on their individual merits and should contact the Recruitment and Admissions Office for additional guidance.

UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

General admissions information

If students have completed a full IB diploma, they can be considered for direct entry to undergraduate courses. The university's minimum entry criteria for the IB range from 32 to 37 points depending on individual course requirements, with a normal expectation of grade 6 or 7 in relevant HL subjects. Some schools stipulate specific grades and subjects at HL, as well as a minimum number of overall points.

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| Total undergraduate enrollment | 26k |
| Overall acceptance rate | 62% |
| Global ranking | 33 |
| Average DP score | 35 |

Example course requirements

Accounting BSc: 37 points overall; 666 in HL subjects, plus no less than 5 for SL English and 6 for mathematics (mathematical studies not accepted)

Additional considerations

SL 5 of the IB diploma satisfies the university's minimum English language requirement.

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS

General admissions information

IB candidates are expected to obtain scores ranging from 35 to 38 points. Individual courses have their own entry requirements.

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| Total undergraduate enrollment | 7k |
| Overall acceptance rate | 39% |
| Global ranking | 68 |
| Average DP score | 36 |

Example course requirements

Economics BSc (Hons): 38 points overall

Additional considerations

IB scores are considered as satisfying English language requirements. English A: Literature or language and literature—SL 4/5 or HL 5/6 depending on course; English B—SL 6/7 or HL 4/5 depending on course; history—SL 4/5 or HL 4/5 depending on course.

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

General admissions information

The university is committed to giving full and fair consideration to all entry qualification information presented by individual applicants. We welcome applications from candidates offering many different qualifications, including the International Baccalaureate. Typical offers are listed under each course entry, and you should check the listed entry requirements for the course you are interested in.

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| Total undergraduate enrollment | 13k |
| Overall acceptance rate | 63% |
| Global ranking | 48 |
| Average DP score | 37 |

Example course requirements

International Management BSc. (Hons): 38 points overall





International Baccalaureate®
Baccalauréat International
Bachillerato Internacional