

vorbei. Rückblickend lächelt man über anfängliche Befürchtungen und Ängste über die Herausforderungen des IBs und auch über die unangenehme, anstrengende Zeit, wo man nachts verzweifelt am PC saß. Was einem bleibt ist das Gefühl etwas geschafft zu haben, eine Zusatzleistung, die sich immerhin über zwei Jahre erstreckt hat. Die wichtigste Entwicklung, die wir mei-

ner Meinung nach gemacht haben, ist jedoch nicht in erster Linie die Verbesserung unserer Englischkenntnisse, insbesondere in wissenschaftlichen und philosophischen Bereichen, sondern die Fähigkeit erworben zu haben, eigenständig zu arbeiten und durchzuhalten, das bedeutet eine Sache bis zu Ende zu führen und so zum Ziel zu gelangen.

Mischko Heming



Why Universities Like the IB

Ein Bericht von Nick Lee

Als Vertreter der IBO hält Nick Lee von Oxford aus den Kontakt zu Universitäten in Europa, Nordafrika und dem Mittleren Osten. Im Rahmen des IB-Koordinatoren-Trainings, das er ab März 2009 leitete, bat Karmen Heup ihn seine Sicht bezüglich der Akzeptanz des IB in unserem Newsletter kurz zusammenzufassen.

Do universities like the IB?

I have been asked to reflect on 'Why universities like the IB Diploma Programme', and I thought first that it would be good to answer the question, 'Do universities like the Diploma programme?'. I can state 'Yes' to that with a fair degree of confidence. For example, a survey in the UK in 2003 produced quotes such as, "**IB students perform well and do not fail or drop out**" (The University of Dundee), "**IB students are more flexible, more open to new ideas and are more ready to question and challenge**" (University of Essex). This survey, which received responses from 78 UK universities, asked participants to rate the DP on six scales compared with A levels (Historically a well-respected national set of exams). It scored more highly on all six: depth, breadth, critical thinking, communication skills, self-management, and motivation.

„Das International Baccalaureate wird heute von Universitäten schon mehr geschätzt als der britische Schulabschluss.“

Similar surveys have been performed in Australia and elsewhere. In addition,

since I became *University Liaison Officer*, I have been pleased with the positive comments that university staff have made.

Why is the IB preferred to many national exams?

So I can now ask, why do universities like the DP? First, I hope it is because of the Mission. How many other academic curricula have a mission to **encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right?** This is coupled with: **challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment**. I suspect that for too many universities it is the last two words that count for most, but I hope that the more enlightened ones are encouraged by the rest as well.

Second, they like the combination of depth and breadth. The depth comes from the Higher level subjects and from the Extended Essay. Breadth comes from the requirement to do subjects from six groups and from ToK. Notice



that there is a clever compromise here between those national systems where students simply take a range of different subjects at the same level, such as many of those on the continent of Europe, and those where early specialisation is encouraged, such as in the UK. I am sure that this combination was not designed as a compromise. Instead, the designers of the DP felt that both systems had their advantages, and that the DP could have the best of both worlds!

Third, they like the points scoring system. It discriminates well at all levels, so universities such as those in the UK and the USA which are selective at this level can choose applicants suited to their courses.

Fourth, and perhaps most crucially, they like the skills that the DP develops. The DP nurtures a range of interlinked skills:

- Research skills – from the Extended Essay plus certain internal assessment requirements.
- Critical skills – from Theory of Knowledge plus aspects of work in all the subjects.
- Language skills – from the requirement for students to study both a first and a second language, plus the need for language skills in the other subjects, the Extended Essay, and Theory of Knowledge.
- Analytical skills – from Individuals and Societies subjects such as history and psychology, and from sciences and the Theory of Knowledge course.
- Mathematical skills – from Maths plus other subjects that use Maths.
- Creative skills – from Arts, CAS, plus most other subjects.
- Personal skills – from CAS plus all other components of the DP: group work in science, oral work in languages and Theory of Knowledge, and so on.

In a portfolio world, the range of skills and the flexibility mentioned by Essex above are much appreciated by universities. For example, in the UK the move in medicine courses towards problem-based learning has led to added appreciation of the DP because its students have the skills to approach the problems positively and productively.

A fifth point, DP students are not afraid to move out of their academic comfort zone. The structure of the DP means that they must study demanding subjects that are not necessarily their strong ones. Universities can see that this reflects the mindset of a student who is prepared to overcome difficulties.

Sixth, and this is another key point. DP students are well organised and well motivated. The demand and challenge of DP studies mean that these qualities are brought to the fore. Of course, they are essential for success at University as well, so as Dundee University says, DP students *perform well and do not fail or drop out*.

And finally, to return to the Mission: in a global world DP students are internationally-minded. **The IBO (International Baccalaureate Organisation) aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.** This is not an essential academic skill, but it does mean that DP students have something else extra to offer when they enter university, and in the future. Once horizons have been broadened, they cannot be narrowed down again.

Nick Lee
IBAEM / IBSCA University Liaison Officer

Die Zielsetzung des IB:

Das *IB Diploma Programme* fördert insbesondere folgende Bereiche:

- Effizientes Recherchieren
- Kritisches Hinterfragen
- Kompetente Sprachbeherrschung
- Analytische Problemlösung
- Mathematisch-logisches Denken
- Kreativität
- Persönlichkeitsentwicklung

*Horizonte, die einmal erweitert wurden,
lassen sich nie wieder einengen.*

