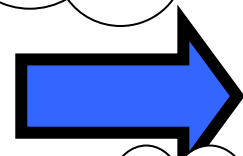


# Comparison of IB and AP Programs at Fairview

	International Baccalaureate	Advanced Placement	Fairview Honors Program
<b>Purpose</b>	Devoted to educational excellence, high performance standards - international perspective	Devoted to educational excellence, high performance standards	<b>Suited to individual goals</b>
<b>Levels</b>	Pre-IB grades 9 & 10. Full IB grades 11 & 12 (Higher Level, Standard Level)	10 - 12 depending on readiness of student	<b>All levels available</b>
<b>Commitment (what is required)</b>	Holistic - six college prep subjects and other requirements (IB diploma) or single courses only (certificates)	Individual - Single courses and/or single exams	<b>All options available</b>
<b>Assessments</b>	Class projects in the form of labs, portfolios, essays, exhibits, performances, etc. Essay type final exams	Final exam mostly in the form of multiple choice, Document Based Questions	<b>The best of IB and AP</b>
<b>College Admissions</b>	Favorable for demonstrating ability to handle academic challenge. Ranked as "most rigorous program available"	Favorable for demonstrating ability to handle academic challenge	<b>Offers students best opportunities to demonstrate capabilities</b>
<b>College Credit / Advanced Standing</b>	Depends on college unique policies. More credit for HL than SL. IB diploma can offer advanced class standing	Depends on college unique policies. More accepted in U.S.	<b>All combinations of IB/AP available to maximize credit</b>
<b>Correlation with College Success</b>	80% of IB students with A's and B's maintain A's and B's in college	40% of AP students with A's and B's maintain A's and B's in college	<b>Both foster college success</b>

98% of IB diploma candidates also take AP exams

When combining IB and AP, students get the best of both programs!



**Are IB and AP courses the same?**

No. The content may partially overlap, but more often than not, they differ in scope and emphasis. This is why Fairview offers both.



## What is the Difference Between IB and AP?

A question often asked is, “What is the essential difference between the International Baccalaureate (IB) and Advanced Placement (AP) programs?” It is difficult to make a broad statement about the fundamental differences between IB and AP, and it is even more difficult to assertively say one program is better than the other. In fact, a better question to ask is, “How are the two programs similar?” The two programs have much more in common with one another than dissimilarities.

### Similarities

Both programs have rigorous standards for students and faculty; both are devoted to educational excellence; both programs involve dedicated and creative teachers committed to their students, their disciplines, and their profession. Both programs attract highly motivated students who wish to excel academically and attend the most selective colleges and universities, and both programs teach students how to learn, promoting quality college experiences. Moreover, student achievement in either program will most likely lead to advanced standing in college (earning credit and/or waivers for introductory college courses).

In summary, the goals, objectives, or aims of the two programs are essentially the same, and both programs have a long track record of successes. From this perspective, students will be well served by either program. Fairview’s ability to deliver both programs gives students a great opportunity to get the best advanced preparatory college education available.

### Differences

The IB and AP programs do indeed have significant differences in curriculum and the manner in which their respective curriculums are delivered. These differences, however, are often only noticeable at the course level (as opposed to two distinct philosophical approaches). Students and parents who require detailed information about how the two programs differ at the course level should consult with individual teachers.

Aside from individual course curriculums, there are three **distinct** differences between the two programs.

1. Target audience. The Advanced Placement program was established in the U.S. in 1955 by the College Board; it was originally designed for U.S. students who would later go to U.S. universities. Although AP now has a marked international presence, the IB curriculum is based on true international standards and is widely recognized internationally. AP tends to be a bit more practical in its curricular approach so that it caters to American university standards. The IB program on the other hand promotes internationalism, appealing to a much broader set of university entrance requirements.

2. Achievement requirements. The AP program is excellent at allowing students to expand their knowledge and skills in areas of strength. If a student is good at mathematics for instance, then there are plenty of options for him/her to take advanced study in that subject alone. To earn an IB diploma, however, students are expected to engage in advanced study in areas of strength **and** at the same time stretch themselves academically in areas of weakness as well. IB diploma candidates also have a series of additional requirements to fulfill beyond the exams, each designed to develop students holistically. In short, the requirements of the IB program are designed to build up the 'whole' student; AP requirements allow students to focus their study in specific areas.
3. Methods of assessment. Both programs administer exams which are then graded by outside officials according to established standards. Roughly 80% of AP exams are comprised of multiple choice questions with the remaining percentage devoted to written essays. IB exams require students to hand-write their responses to questions in essay form.<sup>1</sup> This requires a large cadre of human graders, comprised of university officials and academics from around the world (another important component of the international aspect of the IB program). A student's final IB subject score will be based on his/her exam performance in addition to an evaluation of a sample piece of course work (class projects in the form of labs, portfolios, essays, exhibits, performances, etc.). Final AP scores are based on exam scores alone. The biggest difference in methods of assessment is within the individual subjects themselves. In certain subjects, AP courses emphasize breadth of knowledge in the test, where IB emphasizes depth; in other subjects, it is just the opposite. Please consult with individual subject teachers for further details on the specifics.

## Conclusion

Understanding the differences between IB and AP may seem a bit confusing, especially for those who are new to Fairview, but take heart. From a curricular standpoint, both programs have strengths and weaknesses. Over the last decade of simultaneously teaching IB and AP content to a wide range of students, Fairview faculty have identified and capitalized on these strengths and weaknesses, resulting in curricular pathways that maximize the best components of the two programs.

Which program will provide a better education? An answer to this question is largely dependent on individual student abilities, subjects of interest, and academic goals. To be certain, though, students who take a combination of IB and AP classes or take IB/AP hybrid courses will absolutely have an enriched academic experience beyond what the traditional IB or AP program alone can offer. Students and parents are encouraged to view the two programs as complimentary to promoting academic excellence.

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<sup>1</sup> The one exception to this is the first component of science exams, which are multiple choice questions. Overall, 95% of all IB exams require essay-type, student-written responses to questions. Many students initially find the essay format a bit intimidating, but later realize that written responses to questions actually allows them to genuinely demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of topics.