

The IB Career-related Programme: A Guide for Employers



Fairfield High School places a strong emphasis on developing skills that young people will need to move into employment and has a number of projects to take this further. These include seeking accreditation as a provider of the International Baccalaureate Career-related Programme.

The information below explains the IB Career-related Programme (CP) for employers. It details the skills and qualifications acquired by students who have successfully completed this exciting new programme that offers young people the opportunity to follow good quality career-related courses while continuing their involvement in world-class academic study.

Who is the IB?

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit organization that has been delivering educational programmes of excellence for over 45 years. It currently educates more than 1 million students each year in nearly 3,700 schools in over 145 different countries. IB educational programmes are respected worldwide as they are aligned with the very best standards globally. Students become international citizens, capable of studying and working with others from a diverse range of cultures and backgrounds.

What is the CP?

The CP is the newest educational programme from the International Baccalaureate. It is a programme designed to prepare students for employment, further training or university study. Through a focus on work-related learning, the CP prepares young people to have the skill set and outlook required for lifelong 21st century employment. The CP is a challenging level 3 programme, combining both “traditional” academic subject study (very similar to A levels) and career-related/vocational study. It is studied by students aged 16–18 and is a challenging and academically rigorous 2-year programme.

“The CP is outstanding preparation for employment: it is a challenging sixth form programme, and one that is far more holistic and focused on vocational and career-development skills than traditional A levels, whilst it offers far more ‘academic’ challenge than simply studying a vocational qualification on its own.” —Paul Luxmoore, Executive Head Teacher, Dane Court Grammar & King Ethelbert School

The CP is accredited by Ofqual (the qualifications regulatory body in England) as a level 3 Programme, of similar depth to A levels or level 3 vocational qualifications. However, its size and scope is far more diverse: the CP is distinctive in enabling students to study both vocational and academic subjects as well as a demanding 4 part Core, explained further below. The combination studied by every CP student is unique: the programme is tailored by each school to meet the needs, background and context of the students.

“The CP gives students a real experience of a working environment, allows them to apply their knowledge and prepares them to be part of a global workforce.” —Sue Dunn, Head of Education, Employment and Skills, Kent LA



The school makes excellent use of a wide range of partnerships to support students’ achievement and personal development - Ofsted

What do students study?

All CP students study:

- **At least 2 IB Diploma Programme courses**, either at standard level or higher level. However, at either level, these are challenging and academically rigorous.
 - Standard level (SL) subjects have the “depth” but less “volume” than A levels; yet they are more academically rigorous than AS levels.
 - Higher level (HL) subjects have the “depth” and “volume” of A levels
 - Each subject is graded from 7 (the highest, equivalent to an A* at A level) to 1 (the lowest). In the CP students need to get a grade 3 in at least 2 DP courses. A grade 2 is comparable to an E grade at A level.
- **A vocational qualification**: this is chosen by the student’s school or college. It could be a BTEC, OCR National or another qualification of appropriate depth. It must appear on the Ofqual register of accredited qualifications.
- The **CP Core**, which links both the “academic” and “career-related” parts of a student’s learning. The CP Core consists of:
 - An **Approaches to learning** course of 90 hours, focusing on transferrable work and life skills. The course emphasizes critical and ethical thinking, intercultural understanding and the ability to communicate effectively.
 - A **Language development** programme of at least 50 hours. All CP students develop a second language that increases their understanding of the wider world and ability to work with people from different backgrounds and cultures.
 - A **Reflective** project where students produce a comprehensive research project where they identify, analyse and critically discuss a moral or ethical issue stemming from their career-related study.
 - **Community and service** consisting of at least 50 hours of voluntary work, with a focus on service learning, using community service as a vehicle for new learning. The focus is on knowledge development, civic development, social development and personal development.

“At Shell we look for applicants from diverse backgrounds who will thrive on the challenges that we face in our global businesses. In particular we look for 3 key attributes: the capacity to handle and analyse complex information; the drive to overcome difficulties and to deliver innovative and workable solutions, and also the ability and sensitivity to lead and influence others across a wide range of cultures.” –Paul Milliken, Vice President, Shell, Head of Human Resources, UK

What can you expect from a CP student?

The CP is a challenging programme; students who have successfully completed the CP have had to complete vocational and academic studies, work hard and manage their time effectively. Students from any of the IB’s programmes can reflect on their ways of working, have learnt to be open to new ideas and to new ways of learning. All IB students are communicators and understand their place in a global society. They have learned that others, with their differences, may also be right.

All CP students have successfully:

- studied academic and vocational subjects
- studied a modern language and developed intercultural understanding
- produced an extended research project on a moral or ethical dilemma in a work-related context
- contributed to their community through voluntary service.

They have also developed a broad range of skills to prepare them specifically for employment. Holders of the CP Certificate have:

- developed practical, career-related skills
- reflected on moral and ethical issues related to the workplace
- communicated clearly and effectively to different audiences, giving presentations and producing reports
- considered effective ways to work with others from different countries, cultures and backgrounds
- worked independently to deadlines, and in collaboration with others
- had to think critically and creatively in rapidly-changing global workplaces
- demonstrated self-confidence, resilience and flexibility
- considered new perspectives and other points of view