

# Understanding the German International Abitur

## *A Comparison Chart*

Understanding the similarities and differences between the German International Abitur (IA), the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (IB), and a US High School Diploma with Advanced Placement (AP) courses is helpful in making decisions about your child's future academic path.

When it comes to university applications, particularly at highly competitive schools, admissions officers look to see whether a student has taken the most rigorous courses available. As a parent, you can be sure that a student pursuing the German International Abitur diploma falls squarely into that category. Moreover, with only 4 schools in the US offering the degree, a student with credentials including both the International Abitur **AND** a US High School Diploma will stand out positively in any applicant pool. Here's how the programs compare:



	US HS Diploma with Advanced Placement (AP) courses	German International Abitur (IA)	International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB)
Number of subjects	High School students are required to satisfy specific requirements, set at the state or local level, and can select individual subjects to take as an AP course depending on their school's offerings.	Students are required to take the following subjects taught across 3 years in Grades 10-12: German, English, Math, History, US History, Social Studies, Music or Art, Ethics, Physical Education and 4 subjects from Foreign Languages (English, French, Latin, Spanish) and Natural Sciences (Biology, Chemistry, Physics). At GISW, all classes are taught at an advanced level. Some subjects require additional years of study beginning in lower grades and continuing through 12th grade.	Students select a mix of standard and higher-level courses in 6 groups, taught across Grades 11-12. 1. Language and Literature 2. Language Acquisition 3. Individuals & Societies (social sciences) 4. Sciences 5. Mathematics 6. Arts. Students may make limited substitutions. Students must also complete a Theory of Knowledge course, submit a 4,000 word Extended Essay and fulfill requirements for creativity, activity, and service projects.
Choice of Classes	Students choose which subjects to take as an AP course. Within their school's offerings, there may also be honors or on-level courses, providing a differing level of academic rigor.	Through 9th grade, students have a full complement of subjects. At that point they may choose to further pursue 1) their second foreign language; 2) a third foreign language or physics; 3) music or art.	Students choose their class for each subject area, and also choose the combination of Higher Level and Standard Level courses, based on the school's offerings and teacher recommendations.



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	US HS Diploma with Advanced Placement (AP) courses	German International Abitur (IA)	International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB)
College Entry	A HS diploma and AP courses do not guarantee acceptance into college. AP courses are well-regarded by prestigious universities worldwide.	The IA offers <i>entry</i> into any German university. There are some competitive programs that may require a particular IA score or have other enrollment requirements. The IA is well-regarded by prestigious universities world-wide.	The IB Diploma does not guarantee acceptance into any college. The IB Diploma is well-regarded by prestigious universities worldwide.
College Credit	Universities may offer credit for AP courses with a score of 4 or 5.	Universities may offer credit for successful Abitur exam results.	Universities may offer credit for IB Higher Level classes with a score of 6 or 7.
Partial Credit	N/A	N/A	Students may take individual IB classes for course credit.
Exams	Students take one exam per AP course. Exam format differs by course matter. Exams are administered world-wide at the same time.	Students must take 5 exams. Exam 1: German - written. Exams 2-3: Written. Chosen from the following: Math, English, 2nd Foreign Language, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, History, or Social Studies. Exam 4: Oral. Also chosen from the list above, cannot be the same as Exam 2 or 3, and has been studied for at least 3 years. Exam 5: Oral. In the form of a presentation. Two of Exams 2-5 may be in English. Exams are administered in the same period across geographic regions.	Students take one exam for each of the 6 courses. Language exams have both written and oral components. Other exams may have multiple papers or components. Exams are administered world-wide at the same time.
US Schools with the program	22,169 (2018, <i>The College Board</i> )	4	940 (2018, <i>International Baccalaureate Organization</i> )

The German International Abitur is based on an internationally acclaimed college preparatory curriculum. It is a diploma that provides an academically exceptional and culturally rich multilingual education to students of all nationalities and backgrounds.

Four schools in the USA are authorized to offer the German International Abitur. This regulated organization of German Schools Abroad assures high quality for graduates and opens doors to possibilities worldwide.

