
Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate General Information, 2020-21

Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Programs

Introduction

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme are advanced academic programs that make rigorous, college-level academic content available to secondary school students. All Texas colleges and universities must adopt and implement a policy to grant undergraduate course credit for incoming freshmen who have completed the IB Diploma Programme or who have achieved required scores on one or more AP examinations (Texas Education Code [TEC] §51.968, 2022). The AP Program is a cooperative educational partnership between secondary schools and colleges and universities, overseen by the College Board. The IB Diploma Programme is an academic program offered in secondary schools throughout the world and is overseen by IB, a nonprofit educational foundation.

This document supplements the following reports: *Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Examination Results in Texas Public Schools, 2020-21* (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2022a) and *Advanced Placement Examination Results in Texas and the United States, 2020-21* (TEA, 2022c). It provides background information on the AP and IB programs, including associated courses, examinations, and examination fees. In addition, the document discusses the Texas AP Incentive Program, Texas policy related to uses of AP and IB examination results, data sources, and methodological considerations.

COVID-19 Pandemic

Overview. In spring 2020, given the impact of COVID-19, the governor of Texas used his statutory authority under Texas Government Code §418.016 to suspend in-school instruction across the state. All students statewide were learning remotely at the end of the 2019-20 school year. During the 2020-21 school year, as the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect schooling, Texas public school districts could offer full-time in-person, full-time remote, and hybrid learning. This section details the impact the COVID-19 pandemic had on AP and IB examinations for the 2019-20 and 2020-21 school years.

In the 2020-21 school year, IB developed two assessment routes for examinations: an examination route and a non-examination route (IB, 2022). For both routes, IB examiners assessed student coursework to award examination scores. For the examination route, students' examination scores were calculated as in prior years, using examination results and coursework. For the non-examination route, students' examination scores were calculated as in 2020, using coursework and teacher-submitted predicted grades, and the scores were calculated using the same weights as in the examination route. To ensure predicted grade accuracy, IB provided each school with a school-specific distribution of predicted grades based on three prior years of performance data. Examination scores were awarded on the same 1 to 7 scale as in previous years.

Courses

AP Program. The College Board's AP Program offers more than 30 courses in six academic areas, including arts, English, history and social sciences, mathematics and computer science, sciences, and world languages and cultures (College Board, 2021b). Although most participants in the program are 11th and 12th graders approaching the transition to college, students in lower grades also take AP courses and examinations.

Each AP course is developed by an AP development committee composed of an equal number of college and university academic faculty and experienced high school AP teachers from across the country (College Board, 2021a). Although high school AP teachers have discretion to present the material in the way they deem most appropriate, the College Board provides course descriptions that outline the course content, describe the curricular goals of the subject, and provide sample examination questions (College Board, 2021c). Course descriptions for new courses are typically developed over a two- to three-year period (College Board, 2021a). The College Board evaluates and revises AP courses and examinations regularly.

The College Board requires high schools to submit AP course audit materials to request authorization to assign the "AP" designation to a course (College Board, 2021c). AP course audit materials include a subject-specific audit form and a course syllabus from each teacher who is planning to teach a proposed A

Schools may develop a course that IB does not otherwise offer by using a School Based Syllabus (IB, 2017). The syllabus is developed in close collaboration with IB and must be approved by IB prior to the course being offered by the school. Astronomy is an example of a course offered using a School Based Syllabus.

Diploma candidates are required to select a course from each subject group (IB, 2016). The single exception is the arts, for which students may substitute a second course from the sciences, individuals and societies, or languages subject groups (IB, 2021c). The six subject group courses are taken at either standard level, which consists of 150 teaching hours, or higher level, which consists of 240 teaching hours. Students must take at least three, but not more than four, subject-group courses at higher level. Higher-level courses differ from standard-level courses in that students are "expected to demonstrate a greater body of knowledge, understanding, and skills at higher level."

Each IB course is reviewed over a seven-year period by IB staff, teachers, examiners, and consultants to ensure that course materials are relevant and up-to-date (IB, 2014). IB schools worldwide contribute to the review process by completing surveys, attending curriculum review meetings, and commenting on draft subject guides.

To be eligible to apply for authorization to participate in the IB Diploma Programme, a high school must first submit a successful application for candidacy (IB, 2018b). To be considered for candidacy, each school must conduct a feasibility study, and appropriate school faculty must attend IB professional development workshops, among several other requirements. Each prospective IB teacher must attend an IB workshop in the subject he or she plans to teach. The workshops provide course material that aids each teacher in creating a course outline, which must be submitted with the authorization request. After a school submits an authorization request, IB visits the school to verify the details of the application before the IB director general decides whether to authorize the school's request.

Examinations

AP Program. Although most students who take AP examinations do so after having completed the corresponding AP courses, a student is not required to complete the course before taking the examination, nor is a student required to take the examination after having completed the course. Each AP examination is administered annually in May and includes a free-response section, either essay or problem solving, and a section of multiple-choice questions (College Board, 2021). There are exceptions (IB) 12 0 612

The AP development committees establish grading standards to ensure AP scores are valid measures of college-level performance (College Board, 2021e). College faculty members who teach comparable college courses develop the criteria for earning each score, from 1 to 5, on the AP examinations. The development committee then reviews the criteria and determines the number of questions a student must answer correctly to earn each score. These raw scores become the cut points for the examination scores on the five-point scale. Additionally, the development committees administer portions of the examinations to college students in corresponding college courses, and the results are compared with final course grades. For example, an AP Psychology examination would be administered to college students in an introductory-level college psychology course. The students' raw scores on the examinations are then compared with their grades in the course. The results of the college comparability studies are used to calibrate the cut scores established by the development committees.

IB Diploma Programme. Although it is very uncommon, students may take IB examinations without having completed the corresponding IB courses. A student is not required to complete the course before taking the examination, nor is a student required to take the examination after having completed the course. It is important to note that IB refers to final course grades as examination scores, and TEA adheres to this terminology when reporting IB performance data. The IB Diploma Programme uses three types of assessments to award final course grades, which range from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest): internal assessments, non-examination components, and standardized examinations (IB, 2018a, 2021d). Internal assessments, which include oral examinations, project work, fieldwork in geography, laboratory work, mathematical investigations, and artistic performances, are overseen by the local teacher of a course and can be assessed either by the teacher or by an external IB examiner (IB, 2018a, 2021a). Non-examination components, which include extended essays and theory of knowledge essays, are assessed externally by an IB examiner (IB, 2021d). Standardized examinations, which include short-response, essay, case-study, and multiple-choice questions, are administered locally and scored externally (IB, 2021a). Because standardized examinations are assumed to be the most objective and reliable of the three types of assessments, their results form the basis of the assessment for most courses.

Examination questions are developed by a team of senior examiners, IB staff, and external consultants (IB, 2018a). After questions are reviewed for attributes such as course content coverage and lack of bias, they are sent to external advisors for independent review. The examinations are then translated into French and Spanish, reviewed for translation accuracy, and delivered to schools. For open-ended and non-multiple-choice items, detailed scoring criteria are provided to examiners so the items can be scored as objectively as possible.

Most diploma candidates complete all six subject-group assessments in May at the end of the two-year program, but some choose to take one or two examinations at the end of their first year. Candidates complete the standardized examinations over a period of approximately three weeks and are tested for no more than six and a half hours each day (IB, 2018a).

Examination Fees

AP Program. For the 2020-21 school year, the fee for each AP examination was \$95, except for the AP Seminar and AP Research examinations, which had fees of \$143 each (College Board, 2021h). Qualifying low-income students received a \$33 fee reduction from the College Board in 2020-21. For students who qualified for this fee reduction, testing centers waived the \$9 administration fee (College Board, 2021d). Students in financial need received additional reductions. TEA assumed \$32 of the cost of every AP examination taken by an eligible Texas public school student (TEA, 2020a).

Awards and subsidies. Funding of individual components of the AP Incentive Program during each fiscal biennium is subject to legislative appropriations. Seven awards had the potential to be funded under the AP Incentive Program for the 2020-21 school year (TEC §28.053, 2022; 19 TAC §74.29, 2022, amended to be effective August 24, 2010). Districts received reimbursements of up to \$450 in 2020-21 for each eligible teacher who attended a TEA-approved training targeted for: Pre-AP, AP, Middle Years Programme, IB, or other equivalent advanced courses (TEA, 2020b). Sufficient funds were not available to fund the six remaining awards in 2020-21. These awards were: (a) a one-time award of \$250 for first-time teachers of an AP or IB course; (b) a share of the teacher bonus pool proportional to the number of classes taught at a school; (c) \$50 deposited in the teacher bonus pool for each student receiving a score of at least 3 on an AP examination or 4 on an IB examination at a school; (d) a testing fee reimbursement, not to exceed \$65, for each student receiving a score of at least 3 on an AP examination or 4 on an IB examination; (e) a one-time \$3,000 equipment grant for participating schools for providing an AP or IB course, based on need as determined by the commissioner of education; and (f) \$100 for participating schools for each student who received a score of at least 3 on an AP examination or 4 on an IB examination. School principals were required to establish campus teams to determine the uses of funds awarded, with priority given to academic enhancement purposes (TEC §§28.053 and 28.055, 2022).

The AP Incentive Program also included subsidies for AP and IB examinations for the 2020-21 school year. Subsidies were available to examinees in Texas public schools who demonstrated financial need in accordance with guidelines adopted by the SBOE that are consistent with those developed by the College Board adopted by the SBOE

requirements (Title 19 of the Texas Administrative Code [TAC] §74.11, 2022, amended to be effective August 1, 2021; §§74.12-74.13, 2022, amended to be effective August 1, 2020; §101.4002, 2022, amended to be effective March 30, 2021).

Texas Public School Accountability System

The Texas public school accountability system evaluates the performance of districts and campuses in three domains: Student Achievement, School Progress, and Closing the Gaps (Texas Education Agency [TEA], 2022d; TEC, Chapter 39, Subchapter G, 2022). For the 2022 accountability ratings cycle, all districts and campuses received a label of *A*, *B*, *C*, or *Not Rated: Senate Bill 1365*. Districts and campuses received overall ratings based on results across a number of indicators in the three domains. Districts and campuses receiving overall or domain scaled scores of at least 70 received *A-C* ratings, while scores below 70 received the label *Not Rated: SB 1365*. Performance on AP and IB was a component of the college, career, and military readiness (CCMR) indicators, which were included in all three domains.

College, Career, and Military Readiness Indicators

The CCMR indicators in the Texas public school accountability system use performance data from the ACT, AP, IB, SAT, and Texas Success Initiative assessments, among other data, to measure students' preparedness for college, the workforce, or the military (TEA, 2022d). There are two CCMR indicators in the accountability system: one for the Student Achievement and School Progress domains and one for the Closing the Gaps domain. Performance on AP and IB is included in both CCMR indicators. For the 2022 accountability ratings cycle, the CCMR indicator for the Student Achievement and School Progress domains measured the percentage of 2021 annual graduates who scored at or above a criterion score on at least one AP or IB examination in any subject and the CCMR indicator for the Closing the Gaps domain measured the percentage of 2021 annual graduates plus students in Grade 12 in the 2020-21 school year who scored at or above a criterion score on at least one AP or IB examination in any subject. The AP/IB components of the CCMR indicators were evaluated based on data for the 2017-18 through 2020-21 school years.

Distinction Designations

Overview. Under the Texas public school accountability system, distinction designations are awarded to recognize school districts and campuses for outstanding achievement in specified academic areas (TEA, 2022d; TEC, Chapter 39, Subchapter G, 2022). The distinction designations are based on results across a number of indicators. Results for a campus are evaluated in relation to results for a comparison group of similar campuses. Results for a district are evaluated based on results for campus-level indicators aggregated across all campuses in the district. To be eligible to earn a distinction designation, a district or campus must demonstrate acceptable performance as defined by the *2022 Accountability Manual*.

Academic achievement distinction designations. For the 2022 accountability ratings cycle, academic achievement distinction designations (AADDs) were available at the campus level in four

subject areas: English language arts (ELA), mathematics, science, and social studies (TEA, 2022d). Each AADD included two AP/IB indicators: participation in, and performance on, AP/IB examinations in the specified subject area. Examinations are assigned to subject areas using the classifications provided by the testing companies. For purposes of awarding AADDs in a particular subject area, (a) AP/IB examination participation indicators measured the percentages of students in Grades 11 and 12 who took at least one AP or IB examination, and (b) AP/IB examination performance indicators measured the percentages of examinees in Grades 11 and 12 who scored at or above a criterion score on at least one examination. The criterion scores were defined as 3 or higher on an AP examination and 4 or higher on an IB examination. The AP/IB indicators for AADDs were evaluated based on data for the 2020-21 school year. AADDs were not available for districts. For additional information about AP/IB calculations for AADDs, see *Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate Glossary of Terms, 2020-21* (TEA, 2022b).

In 2020-21, Texas public school students participated in one or more of the following AP examinations that were included in calculations of AADD AP/IB indicators in the subject areas of ELA, mathematics, science, and social studies: two examinations in ELA (English Language and Composition, and English Literature and Composition); five examinations in mathematics (Calculus AB, Calculus BC, Computer Science A, Computer Science Principles, and Statistics); seven examinations in science (Biology, Chemistry, Environment Science, Physics 1, Physics 2, Physics C: Electricity and Magnetism, and Physics C: Mechanics); and nine examinations in social studies (Comparative Government and Politics, European History, Human Geography, Macroeconomics, Microeconomics, Psychology, United States Government and Politics, United States History, and World History: Modern).

During the same school year, Texas public school students participated in one or more of the following IB examinations in the subject areas of ELA, m 0 1 270.86 458.98 Tm0 g0 G[(and)-3(n)-3(in)-2(e examinatio)-3

Postsecondary readiness distinction designations. For the 2022 accountability ratings cycle, one postsecondary readiness distinction designation (PRDD) was available at the campus level, and one was available at the district level (TEA, 2022d). In each case, the PRDD included two AP/IB indicators: participation in AP/IB examinations in any subject and college, career, and military ready graduates. For purposes of awarding PRDDs, the AP/IB examination participation indicator measured the percentage of students in Grades 11 and 12 who took at least one AP or IB examination in any subject. This AP/IB indicator was evaluated based on data for the 2020-21 school year. The college, career, and military ready graduates indicator measured the percentage of 2021 annual graduates who scored at or above a criterion score on at least one AP or IB examination in any subject, among other CCMR criteria. The criterion scores were defined as 3 or higher on an AP examination and 4 or higher on an IB examination. This AP/IB

nonbinary gender option. In the 2020-21 school year, there were six AP/IB examinees who selected the nonbinary gender option and did not match to student records in PEIMS.

Sums of examinees or examinations by student characteristic and by program participation may differ from one another or from the total of all examinees or examinations. Whereas counts of all examinees reflect all examinees reported by the testing companies, counts of examinees by race/ethnicity and by gender reflect examinees who could be found in PEIMS plus examinees who could not be found in PEIMS but for whom the specified demographic data were available from the testing companies. Examinees reported by the testing companies may not be found in PEIMS because of data reporting errors. Because data on other student characteristics and program participation are not available in PEIMS, the counts of examinees and examinations by student characteristic and by program participation may not match to student records in PEIMS.

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