

# Earning college credit in high school: AP and IB

## [+] Pros

- + You can earn college credit or be placed in higher level courses by earning a qualifying score on the AP exam.
- + Advancing to higher level courses early saves time in pursuing a degree.
- + College credit earned or advanced placement saves money on tuition for unnecessary classes.
- + AP material shows college admissions departments your willingness to take challenging courses, thus improving your chances of being admitted.
- + Studying AP subject matter prepares high school students for the rigor of college material.
- + Good study habits are gained by experiencing college level curricula.

One way to save time and money in college is for students to earn college credit during high school. There are several ways to do this. For example, some high schools offer dual-enrollment programs that allow students to take college courses and earn credit that can be applied not only toward high school graduation requirements, but also toward an undergraduate degree.

Another option is to enroll in college-level courses taught in high school. Perhaps the most common programs are Advanced Placement (AP) and the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme. Below is information about these programs—check with your high school for program details and the availability of courses in your area.

## Advanced Placement

AP courses and exams are offered in more than 30 subject areas—a complete list of subjects can be found at [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). Please note that not all subjects are available in every high school that offers AP courses. You will need to check with the office that administers AP courses at your school for a list of available subjects and enrollment information.

Once enrolled in AP courses, students should sign up for the exam that will be administered at the end of the course. If the AP subject exam you wish to take is not offered as a course at your high school, talk to the office responsible for AP coursework to look into other options.

The AP exam is scored on a five-point scale. A score of three is considered freshman college level. More than 90% of four-year colleges in the U.S. grant credit and/or advanced placement for qualifying scores; be sure to submit scores of three or higher to the admissions office. Check with the college admissions office of the school you plan to attend for specific requirements.

## IB Diploma Programme

The IB Diploma Programme is an academically challenging educational program for students aged 16 to 19. It is designed to prepare students for success at the college level and beyond. This educational program is taught in specific high schools and is recognized around the world for its rigorous material and philosophy of learning through experience.

Students enrolled in the IB Diploma Programme study six courses in subjects that include languages, social studies, experimental sciences, mathematics, and the arts. The Diploma Programme also includes three core requirements:

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- The extended essay is written as a research paper on a question posed by one of the subjects the student is currently taking.
- Theory of knowledge is a course designed to reflect on the nature of knowledge and different kinds of knowledge.
- Creativity, action, service requires the students to engage in real-life scenarios outside of the classroom to actively learn and gain experience.

Students take written exams at the end of the Diploma Programme, and a diploma is awarded to students who earn at least 24 points for all coursework completed. For more information about the IB Diploma Programme, visit [www.ibo.org](http://www.ibo.org).

## College admissions and AP/IB courses

High school students who are planning to continue their education at college can use the AP courses/exams or IB courses to stand out in the admissions process. The course material is challenging and shows your commitment to academics. To ensure that any college-level programs you participate in during high school will be accepted by the college you plan to attend, work with that school's admissions office early in the college-planning process.

### Need more information?

The College Place is here to help you with free college-planning resources and personal advice. Visit our website at [www.ecmc.org](http://www.ecmc.org).