



# UCC

UPPER CANADA COLLEGE

200 Lonsdale Road  
Toronto, ON Canada M4V 1W6  
416-488-1125  
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## UCC Graduation Pathways

### IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME COURSES PATHWAY | FAQ

Below are frequently asked questions regarding the IB Diploma Programme (IB DP) Courses Pathway at UCC.

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#### 1. OVERVIEW OF THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME COURSES PATHWAY

##### 1.a. Why is UCC offering the IB DP Courses Pathway option?

UCC is a committed IB Continuum World School and we are evolving our program to best meet the needs of our students. The new UCC Graduation Pathways are being introduced to enhance student options in Years 11 and 12. The pathways will expand the breadth and depth of opportunities available to students so that they can find and pursue their passions at UCC and beyond.

The IB Diploma Programme (IB DP) Courses Pathway offers increased flexibility and allows for specialization in course selection. It does this while retaining the benefits of a liberal education and the rigour of IB approaches to learning and courses. It also includes signature features of the IB, such as the DP Core course (Theory of Knowledge; Extended Essay; Creativity, Activity, Service), which helps students excel in postsecondary studies and in finding success in life.

##### 1.b. What are some of the key features of the IB DP Courses Pathway?

The IB DP Courses Pathway provides a strong IB liberal education with flexibility and personalization for those who have a good idea of their postsecondary plans. This pathway enables students to take IB DP courses based on their areas of interest and their plans for postsecondary studies.

This pathway is grounded in the DP's core ethos, reflecting breadth, academic rigour and international mindedness. The courses offered in this programme are the same rigorous IB courses offered to all Year 11 and 12 students. Increased flexibility allows students who are elite-level athletes, artists and musicians or who have a significant service commitment outside of school to pursue their passion. This pathway may also be suited to students with specific learning needs or those with a specific postsecondary goal in mind.

Graduates will earn the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) as well as IB Course Certificates for all successfully completed IB courses. Students will not be eligible to earn the IB Diploma.

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### **1.c. Is this option easier than the other IB pathways?**

While this pathway offers increased flexibility in course selection, the courses are the same rigorous IB courses offered to all UCC Year 11 and 12 students.

### **1.d. When will the IB DP Courses Pathway be available to UCC students?**

Starting in September 2025, UCC students will have the opportunity to pursue this option as a pathway. Students must first apply to participate in this programme. (See details in Section 3 below). Year 10 students (Class of 2027 and beyond) will have the opportunity to apply starting in fall 2024.

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## **Section 2. Curriculum and Assessment**

### **2.a. How is the IB DP Courses Pathway different from the other IB DP Pathways?**

The courses offered in the IB DP Courses Pathway are the same rigorous IB courses offered to all Year 11 and 12 students (with the exception of the Systems Transformation: Innovations for a Better World course, which is available only to students in the IB DP Systems Transformation Pathway).

Increased flexibility allows students in this pathway to choose an area of greater focus and/or accommodate elite-level participation in co-curricular activities such as athletics, arts or service through reduction in the number of required courses. This pathway also accommodates students with specific learning needs or those with a specific university goal in mind.

### **2.b. What does learning look like in this pathway?**

Students will have the opportunity to select from all Diploma Programme (DP) courses available at UCC in addition to the DP Core course but they will not be bound by the course selection requirements of the IB DP. Students enrolled in the IB DP Courses Pathway are required to complete:

- The DP Core course (Theory of Knowledge; Extended Essay; Creativity, Activity, Service)
- A minimum of four (4) additional courses, which can be HL or SL based on individual needs, university aspirations and credit requirements (in consultation with the University Counselling Office as part of the application process)

The parameters above may be adjusted for documented learning needs.





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## **2.c. What is UCC's new DP Core course and how does it relate to the three Graduation Pathways?**

Starting in 2024–25, UCC has structured the IB DP Core components (Theory of Knowledge; Extended Essay; Creativity, Activity, Service) – into a single course. This approach supports scheduling and reinforces the complementary nature of these three components to foster in students an awareness of themselves, others, and the world. DP Core centers students' own experiences and their position and impact on their various communities, challenging them to explore “Who am I and who are we?”. This course achieves this through four common aims:

- to foster other-mindedness and encourage students to become responsible and actively involved global citizens
- to develop students' self-awareness and sense of identity, and provide an opportunity for reflection on their development of the attributes of the IB learner profile
- to encourage students to be flexible thinkers and doers, who overcome challenges both independently and collaboratively, and who can see connections between disparate things
- to enrich and add value to students' overall learning experiences—supporting, and being supported by, their academic studies in the rest of the programme

All three graduation pathways include the IB DP Core course, providing a common experience for all our Year 11 and 12 students that broadens their education and challenges them to apply their knowledge and skills with a focus on themes including leadership, ethics, empathy, collaboration, and metacognition.

In Theory of Knowledge (TOK), students reflect on the nature of knowledge and on how we know what we claim to know. The Extended Essay (EE) is an independent, self-directed piece of research, culminating with a 4,000-word paper. In Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS), students participate in a range of experiences and at least one real-world, meaningful project.

The DP Core course is about each individual student and how they know. TOK teaches that explicitly, CAS teaches it through experience, and the EE is a manifestation of that knowledge and passion. The course encourages students to see how they are connected to the systems around them, including how they are shaped by them, and how they can shape them.

UCC's DP Core course has been designed to complement all three graduation pathways, and in particular it extends some of the benefits of the new IB DP Systems Transformation Pathway to all our Year 11 and 12 students.

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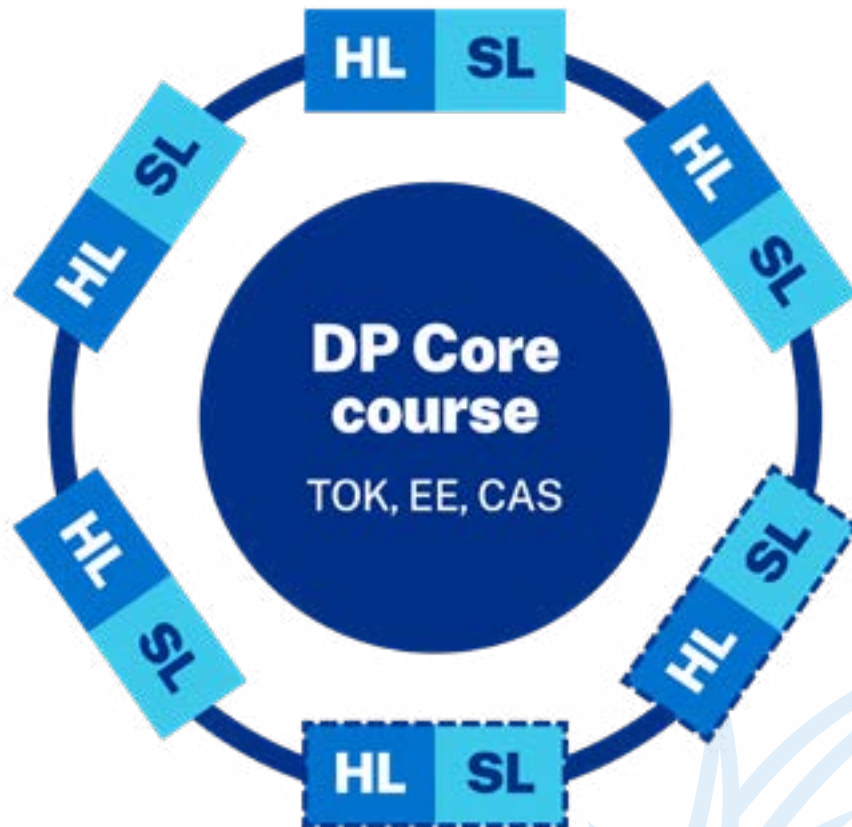
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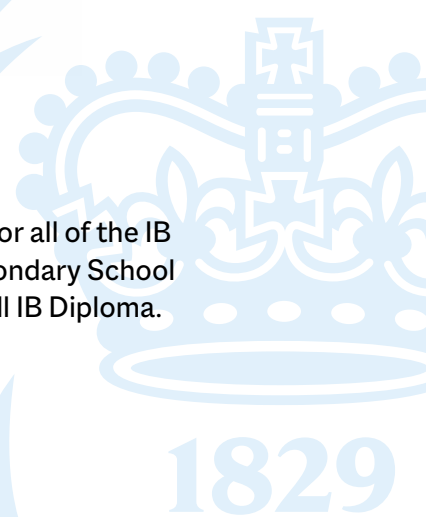
For example, DP Core includes a focus on other-mindedness, notions of stakeholder and interrelationships in systems, which is foundational to systems thinking and design thinking. Furthermore, DP Core explores the impact of technology on knowledge and the ethical uses of current and emerging technologies. With clear links to the IB DP Systems Transformation Pathway, these areas of study are applicable across all three graduation pathways.

Students from all three graduation pathways will be mixed into the DP Core course sections so that students have the opportunity to engage with students in other pathways, as they do in other shared courses.



#### **2.d. Will graduates of this pathway receive the IB Diploma?**

Graduates of the IB DP Courses Pathway will receive IB Course Certificates for all of the IB courses that they successfully complete. They will also earn the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD). Graduates of this pathway will not be eligible to earn the full IB Diploma.





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## SECTION 3. STUDENT SUITABILITY AND PATHWAY APPLICATIONS

### 3.a. Who is this pathway for?

Students interested in this pathway must have a vision and a plan that will be supported by the IB DP Courses Pathway.

This pathway may be of interest to students who want to choose an area of greater focus (e.g. those who want to take three sciences to enter a direct-entry medicine, biomedical or engineering program or those students aiming to attend specific arts or social science programs who may benefit from three languages, arts or humanities courses); those seeking to accommodate elite-level participation in athletics, arts, music or service outside of school; as well as students with specific learning needs.

### 3.b. How can a student enter the IB DP Courses Pathway?

Year 10 students must submit an application to enter this pathway outlining their clear, articulated goals and they must have sign-off from the University Counselling Office and from their parents/guardians.

A selection committee will review all applications.

### 3.c. When do students need to decide if they want to follow this pathway?

Year 10 students will have opportunities to explore the IB DP Courses Pathway and other UCC Graduation Pathways in the fall.

Year 10 students must submit an application, outlining their clear, articulated goals, and they must have sign-off from the University Counselling Office and from their parents/guardians by the end of January.

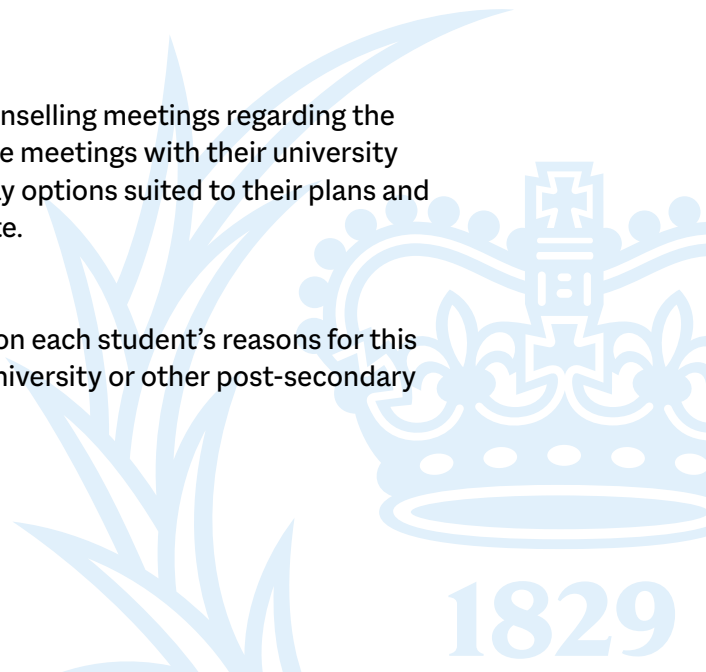
A selection committee will review all applications.

### 3.d. Where can I get more information?

UCC will hold information sessions and University Counselling meetings regarding the pathway options. Year 10 students will have one-to-one meetings with their university counsellors to discuss university plans and the pathway options suited to their plans and interests. Information is also available on UCC's website.

### 3.e. How will students be selected for this pathway?

The selection criteria for this pathway will be focused on each student's reasons for this option as well as demonstrated alignment with their university or other post-secondary goals and plans.





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### **3.f. What if students change their minds?**

Our aim is that all students are able to make informed decisions about their learning program when they submit their final course selections. However, we know that sometimes thinking shifts in the subsequent months, or even in the first few weeks of a new course: for this reason, we support students in making changes to their subject package up until the Thanksgiving Weekend — after which transitions can become much more challenging. These changes are always dependent on the possibilities of the timetable and on space being available in classes.

It is unlikely that an IB DP Courses Pathway student can switch to either the IB DP Pathway or the IB DP Systems Transformation Pathway.

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## **SECTION 4. UNIVERSITY RECOGNITION**

### **4.a. Do universities recognize the IB DP Courses Pathway?**

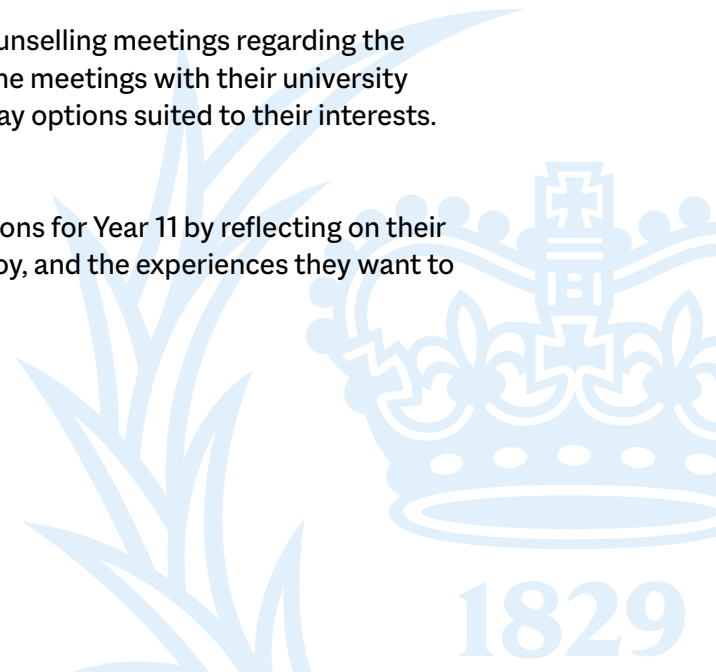
Graduates of this pathway will earn IB Course Certificates and the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) which are recognized by universities around the world. In consultation with UCC's University Counseling Office, students on this pathway will be encouraged to make thoughtful course selections that align with their areas of interest and postsecondary aspirations. This pathway will allow students to meet the prerequisite course requirements for university options.

### **4.b. How can students get advice on whether this pathway suits their university goals?**

Throughout the fall, students and families will have multiple opportunities to explore the new UCC Graduation Pathways and how the three options are suited to students' preferred university destinations.

UCC will hold information sessions and University Counselling meetings regarding the pathway options. Year 10 students will have one-to-one meetings with their university counsellors to discuss university plans and the pathway options suited to their interests. Information is also available on UCC's website.

We encourage students to make initial subject selections for Year 11 by reflecting on their interests and strengths, the kinds of learning they enjoy, and the experiences they want to have in their learning program as a whole.





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#### **4.c. What if students don't know what they want to study at university? How can they make a decision about this pathway?**

Students interested in this pathway must have a vision and a plan that will be supported by the IB DP Courses Pathway.

In the case that a student doesn't know what they want to study at university, then the IB DP Pathway is likely the more suitable option and should be part of discussions with their university counsellor.

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#### **UCC Graduation Pathways | Additional Resources**

**FAQ | [IB DP Pathway](#)**

**FAQ | [IB DP Systems Transformation Pathway](#)**

