



St. Clare's, Oxford
— An International Education —

International Baccalaureate Courses

**International Baccalaureate Diploma
Preparatory IB Course**





Introduction from the Principal

St. Clare's is a very special place. It offers students from all over the world the opportunity to pursue a first-class education in Oxford, one of the most vibrant and interesting cities in Europe.

As you walk through the College campus, you will hear languages being spoken from all over the world. We welcome applications from students irrespective of gender, race, colour, religious belief or national origin. We are proud of the diversity of our student body and the impact it has on the culture and life of the College.

Education has made a profound difference to my own life and allowed me to live and work overseas – in the Far East and the Middle East – as well as in my own country. These experiences have made me appreciate just how important it is to foster an interest in and awareness of international issues. At St. Clare's, we give life and meaning to our mission "To advance international education and understanding".

The following pages highlight some of the characteristics which make St. Clare's special as well as providing information about the International Baccalaureate Diploma and the Pre-IB course.

We hope that you will take the opportunity to visit us.

With my best wishes,

Paula Holloway

Paula Holloway

Why study at St. Clare's?

- You will be in the company of about 250 students aged 15 – 19 representing over forty different nationalities.
- You will be studying the International Baccalaureate Diploma, a qualification which gives you a more broadly balanced education than A Levels, a qualification which, furthermore, is recognised as producing well-rounded students with the necessary skills to make a successful transition to university and the world beyond “school”.
- You will be pursuing an internationally recognised qualification which will allow you to study in universities all over the world. A recent survey among UK universities showed that universities consider the IB to be superior to the current A Level curriculum in terms of breadth, critical thinking, communication skills, self-management and motivation.
- You will be studying at a College which received an outstanding inspection report from the Independent Schools Inspectorate: www.stclares.ac.uk/isi.pdf

What about being away from home for the first time?

Many young adults are ready to leave school and expand their horizons before they are able to go to university.

St. Clare's provides a mature environment where the atmosphere is relaxed, where rules are sensible and students are expected to take responsibility for their own actions.

Many St. Clare's staff have worked overseas and have experienced the joys, bewilderment and frustrations of learning to live in a new country. They understand the problems which students face and know how to help them settle in and get the most out of their studies.

The residential houses were once the homes of Oxford academics and provide a homely and comfortable atmosphere. You are known as an individual as each house is run by a resident warden who will help you find your feet and support and encourage you to take increasing responsibility for your work and life.

What about the academic environment?

St. Clare's is a small college – small by design. We value knowing all our students well; their strengths and the challenges they face.

Our classes are small and allow high-quality interaction between teachers and students. The teaching environment is a combination of being academically challenging whilst also being friendly, supportive and informal.





Where is St. Clare's?

The College is located in a pleasant residential area just north of Oxford city centre. Its 27 buildings are clustered along the Banbury Road and house classrooms, laboratories, a magnificent library, the administration building and residences. The College is only a five-minute walk to Summertown with its banks, chemist, cafés and supermarkets. Buses to the city centre, with its museums, bookshops, galleries and shops of all kinds, stop just outside St. Clare's. There are excellent links to Heathrow, London and the motorway system.

St. Clare's IB Diploma course

The IB Diploma is an internationally recognised qualification, accepted and welcomed by all British universities, and many others throughout the world.

The programme combines in-depth study with a wide range of subjects. It allows students to retain a broad range of subjects: all students continue to study the literature of their native language, learn a foreign language, a scientific subject, the humanities and mathematics. Students do not, therefore, specialise too soon.

The IB also recognises the educational value of independent study and participation in creative, sporting and community service activities, the CAS programme.

The Diploma programme consists of:

- 6 subjects, 3 at Higher level and 3 at Standard level.
- an Extended Essay – a personal research project of up to 4000 words.
- Theory of Knowledge – a practical philosophy course.
- Creativity, Action and Service – a programme of sports, artistic and cultural activities and voluntary service to help others.

At St. Clare's, the six subjects include:

- your first (native) language. This is a literature course, covering literature of the language, plus world literature. It is usually possible to offer every student teaching in their native language.
- a second language such as English, French, German or Spanish for those with some knowledge already; Spanish and Chinese are available at beginner's level.
- a humanities subject such as History, Geography, Economics, Psychology, World Politics or Business and Management.
- a science such as Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Astronomy or Environmental Systems and Societies.
- Mathematics.
- an arts subject such as Visual Arts, Music or Theatre.





Assessment in the International Baccalaureate Diploma:

- is through a set of examinations at the end of the 2 year course and by a programme of internal assessment.
- you score up to 7 points for each subject and can get up to three extra points for the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge.
- you must also complete the CAS programme – which involves a minimum of 150 hours of activities.
- the maximum score for the IB Diploma is 45 points and the pass mark is 24 points.

How well do students do at St. Clare's?

- over 50% of St. Clare's students regularly achieve 34 points or more, the intellectual equivalent of 4 grade "A"s at A level.
- our average total points score and our percentage of students with 40 points or more are both considerably higher than the world averages.

More information about the IB course, our exam results and our students' university destinations can be found on our website: www.stclares.ac.uk/ib

How can I prepare for the IB?

Whether you are a native English speaker or a learner of English, the Preparatory IB course will ensure you are well prepared for the IB. The Pre-IB course lasts one year, though it is organised into 5 modules so students can join at different times of the year.

During the Pre-IB, students acquire academic skills, develop the ability to work independently and gain the confidence necessary to tackle the IB Diploma.

All students will have classes in Mathematics, the Sciences, the Humanities, World Literature, the Arts and Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE).

The Pre-IB course is adjusted to suit the English language level of different students:

- Native English speakers will also follow courses in English Literature and a Modern Foreign Language.
- Learners of English will focus on English Language development.

All Pre-IB students participate in a busy activities programme which is excellent preparation for CAS in the IB.





What guidance will I get for my university application?

The careers and higher education programme is exceptional in both its scope and provision as our students go on to career paths related to their interests and abilities. Our alumni attend highly selective universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, LSE, UCL, Johns Hopkins, Penn, MIT, McGill, Sciences Po; and they also attend specialist vocational courses in art, theatre, music and hospitality. The college has a dedicated, experienced careers and higher education adviser who is available all year round to assist and support students in their choices for higher education around the world, careers and gap years. There is a specialist adviser for all US applications and we are a centre for SAT Reasoning and Subject tests.

The programme develops students' career management skills by raising their awareness of their own strengths and weaknesses as well as helping them to explore options in education and work. They are enabled to make informed decisions and taken through the application processes they need, supported to make effective university applications and CVs as they require.

Through a range of workshops, tutorials, lectures, visits and discussions, students build skills and knowledge so that they can progress to university and be successful global citizens and workers. Emphasis is placed on helping students to analyse the transferable skills they are developing through subjects and extra curricular activities, and they are encouraged to develop these to maximize their chances in life. Our advisers manage a large dedicated careers and higher education library and a comprehensive website which students are taught to use for their research.

Accommodation at St. Clare's

Most of our students are residential, although a number who live locally with their families are day students. The College has 15 houses for IB and Pre-IB students, each with a capacity of less than 30. The houses are therefore a good size for students to get to know each other and for close friendships to be formed. All St. Clare's houses are located within a few minutes' walk of our teaching buildings. Formerly family homes for Oxford University academics, each house is supervised and supported by a resident House Warden and has its own welcoming atmosphere. There are separate houses for male and female students. We have a mixture of twin and single rooms. As an international college, all students share a room with a fellow student of another nationality during their first year at St Clare's. This allows friendships to be built and students get to know someone from a different linguistic and cultural background. Two of our houses are designated for younger students and the Wardens in these houses provide a greater degree of supervision.

Each house has a common room for relaxation with TV and DVD players and there are facilities for preparing hot drinks and snacks. All students have access to washing and drying machines for personal laundry. Bed linen and towels are provided and are changed on a weekly basis. Day students are welcome at St. Clare's and each one is attached to a College house where they can stay over one night per week.

Meals are served in the college dining room and there is always a choice of hot and cold meals, including a vegetarian option. If they prefer, students can have meals and snacks at the Sugar House student café.





Life at St. Clare's

Every evening and weekend we offer a wide range of activities for our students. These provide an important complement to the academic work and offer opportunities for each student to excel. St. Clare's is unusual in having an Activities Department which has three full-time staff members. Each teacher at St. Clare's also contributes to the programme of enrichment activities.

Our busy Music Department offers instrumental and vocal lessons and the chance to play and perform in chamber, choral and jazz groups. Regular concerts in College are supplemented by performances in and around Oxford. Our Theatre and Dance groups offer the chance to participate in workshops and performances, and to experience new styles such as Latin Funk and Capoeira.

Activities, visits, trips and excursions

Students can participate in a team sport, such as football, basketball, volleyball, rugby or an individual activity such as yoga, aerobics, fitness training or swimming. Rock climbing, hill walking, and gym membership are also popular. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is well established and a number of our students earn the prestigious Gold Award each year.

Our students make a contribution to the local community in Oxford, supporting the work of local charities such as Oxfam, or assisting the elderly or disabled. Events and support groups increase involvement in recycling and conservation. Students get involved in the way the College operates, through the Student Council, and in global issues through activities such as the Model United Nations and International Affairs discussion groups.

Study visits enrich the academic curriculum, which could be field trips for Geography, Environmental Systems and Societies or Biology, or visits to galleries, museums and theatres. At weekends students participate in sports and service activities in the local community, for example conservation work, helping in charity shops and working with disabled children. During College vacations there are opportunities to travel further and recent expeditions have taken our students to Barcelona, Belfast, Paris and Israel.





How should I apply to St. Clare's?

You are welcome to visit St. Clare's for a tour and an informal discussion with staff before you apply.

- 1 You can download the application form from our website: www.stclares.ac.uk/ib
- 2 Send us the completed application form, registration fee and school reports for the last two years.
- 3 We will invite you and your family for interview at St. Clare's. When you visit, you will meet the Principal and be interviewed by senior academic staff.
- 4 We may request a confidential reference from your current school.
- 5 If your school reports, interview and reference are all satisfactory, we will offer you a place at St. Clare's.
- 6 When you accept the offer, you will need to pay a deposit to the College confirming your place.

If you have any questions, contact:

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Other IB information

Further information about our recent IB results, information about our students' university destinations and more about our IB curriculum may be found in the IB zone on our website: www.stclares.ac.uk/ib

You can also find information about our application procedures including an application form, as well as dates, payment methods and Terms and Conditions.

Details of our Scholarships and Bursaries and how to apply for them, may also be found here.







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