

HOW THE INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE (IB) EXTENDED ESSAY PREPARES IB STUDENTS FOR JAPANESE HIGHER EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

Okayama University was the first National University in Japan to accept the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma and exempt IB students from taking the University Entrance Exams. In a span of 12 years, from April 2012 to April 2024, 143 IB students have enrolled in 10 Faculties and one special program. The IB Diploma (IBDP) curriculum comprises the IBDP Core and 6 subject groups. The extended essay (EE) is one of the 3 required components of the IBDP core, which prepares IB students for undergraduate research and also allows IB students to explore a topic that interests them, related to one of their 6 IBDP subjects, or it could also be an interdisciplinary approach of a World Studies EE. Previously, the authors conducted a study comparing the EE with the Japanese Kadai Kenkyu or Themed Research at several Japanese Super Global High Schools (SGH). This research is a continuation of the first study focusing on the EE experiences of IB students enrolled at two Japanese National and Public Universities, namely Okayama University and Yokohama City University, and the usefulness of their EE experience in their University academic life.

Keywords: International Baccalaureate, Extended Essay, Japanese Higher Education, Research Education