



Comparison Guide
SACE v IB

About SACE

SACE has been developed and certified by the SACE Board – a South Australian government agency. The SACE curriculum meets Australia’s extremely high academic standards, which have been recognised internationally for decades. The SACE is part of a teaching heritage stretching back to 1874. SACE has also been taught with great success across the Asia Pacific region for more than 40 years. SACE is a pathway to universities globally, with graduates accepted into top-tier universities across the world. There are no limits on where SACE can take you!

The following information will help you assess your options and make an informed decision about which program suits you best.

How is SACE similar to the International Baccalaureate (IB)?

Quality and accreditation	IB	SACE
Rigorous accreditation process	✓	✓
Standardised global curriculum	✓	✓
Develops critical thinking, research and problem-solving skills	✓	✓
Prepares students to succeed at university	✓	✓
Recognised and accepted by universities worldwide	✓	✓
Proven history of graduate success	✓	✓
Two years’ duration*	✓	✓

*SACE duration can be shortened to 1 year with recognition of prior studies.

The differences between SACE and the International Baccalaureate (IB)

Differences	IB	SACE
Authority	International Baccalaureate, a non-profit educational foundation founded in Switzerland.	SACE Board of South Australia, a South Australian Government agency.
Subject selection	<p>In the Diploma Program, students take a compulsory core subject plus six subjects of their choice.</p> <p>The core subject includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The extended essay (4,000 words) • Theory of Knowledge • Creativity, activity, service <p>Students typically choose three subjects to complete at higher level, plus three to complete at standard level. Students must study at least one subject from each of the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literature • Languages • Individuals and societies • Sciences • Mathematics 	<p>SACE students are encouraged to follow their passions and build on their individual strengths.</p> <p>Students take a minimum of five subjects totaling 200 credits.</p> <p>Students must study at least 10 credits of mathematics and 20 credits of English.</p> <p>The remaining credits can be any combination from 100+ subjects, allowing students to follow their interests and goals.</p> <p>There are no core subjects or extra-curricular requirements.</p>
Assessment approach	<p>IB assessment measures the extent to which students have mastered advanced academic skills along with their international outlook and intercultural skills.</p> <p>External examinations are the basis of assessment for most courses, resulting in a standardised approach. Assessments include essays, case studies and structured problems.</p> <p>Higher level subjects typically involve:</p> <p>75% external assessment or examination 25% teacher assessment</p> <p>Teachers typically assess practical elements like performances and laboratory work.</p>	<p>SACE assesses the application of knowledge and soft skills, ensuring students know what to do with what they have learnt. Performance standards are specified for each SACE subject.</p> <p>Stage 1: 100% school-based Stage 2: 70% school-based, 30% external</p> <p>Students are mostly assessed by their teachers, who design assessments to suit their context. There are multiple assessment opportunities at school, including presentations, essays, hands-on projects and coursework.</p> <p>SACE was the first in the world to implement online electronic examinations.</p>
Exam re-sits	Yes, for external exams. Students must wait until the next exam cycle, which could be several months later.	No. The final result is not fully dependent on exams, so most students do not require them. Ongoing assessments and feedback mean that students can improve their grades while they learn.