

Anthropology and the International Baccalaureate: History, Practice and Future Challenges

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ABSTRACT: The article contextualizes the educational, political and social context in which the International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma programme was established and describes the place of social anthropology within the general aims of the diploma programme as a whole. The article then discusses the current diploma curriculum for social and cultural anthropology and the issues arising from this for the teaching and learning of anthropology in a global context, including teacher support and comparisons with other national pre-university educational qualifications. Some of the perceptions of the IB diploma among teachers, students and parents are also briefly discussed.

KEYWORDS: diploma programme, International Baccalaureate, social and cultural anthropology

Introduction

In the mid 1980s I found myself at lunch with Raymond and Rosemary Firth during which Rosemary Firth explained, at length, why it would never be possible successfully to teach social anthropology to pre-university students. At this time the International Baccalaureate (IB) had been doing just that for almost 20 years. This is not to say that the teaching of anthropology at A-Level does not pose genuine pedagogical problems specific to the discipline of anthropology or that those promoting the A-Level believe that these issues have been entirely resolved. These include the lack of teachers with an anthropology background and teachers who may 'at worst ... share common misperceptions of what anthropology is and does – for example, that it is exclusively concerned with the exotic and remote, or with issues of race'.¹ That these fears may be misplaced is evidenced by the high standards of

social and cultural anthropology teaching and learning found within the IB.

Before I get to this, however, I briefly outline the political and ideological contexts that led to the establishment of the IB and the educational rationale for such a programme of study which includes, according to the IB mission statement, the promotion of international mindedness and cross-cultural awareness throughout the Diploma Programme (DP) (e.g. IBO 2006b: 5). These aims self-evidently support the study of anthropology within the IB (since the IB does not teach biological anthropology, references in the remainder of the paper to 'anthropology' are to be understood as referring to social and cultural anthropology). I then move on to locate the anthropology programme within the diploma and explain some of the ways in which the skills, and in particular the higher-order cognitive ones such as 'accessing, ordering, sifting, synthesizing and evaluating information, and creatively constructing

knowledge', are incorporated into the curriculum design, and how assessments are designed to encourage the teaching and learning of these skills (IBO 2004a: 16). I conclude with a brief overview of some current challenges and new developments in the teaching and learning of anthropology in the twenty-first century, including the means by which the IB seeks to ensure that the issues raised by Rosemary Firth and others are both acknowledged and dealt with so that anthropology can be taught alongside any and all intellectually demanding disciplines at the pre-university level.

Founding Rationale of International Baccalaureate and the United World Colleges Movement

The International Baccalaureate was one outcome of several decades of work by committed educationalists such as Kurt Hahn who, as a German Jew, headmaster of a school in Salem, and active promoter of peace and inter-racial understanding, fled Germany in the early 1930s. As a consequence of the experiences of men such as Hahn, the IB diploma programme was devised to be taught in international schools and the IB, along with the original schools that taught the programme, can be considered, in some respects, as critical responses to the twentieth-century world wars. While Hahn did not devise the IB programme, his vision for schools of the future, which led to the formation of the United World Colleges (UWC), made such a programme of study inevitable: 'In Britain Hahn founded, or was instrumental in founding, Gordonstoun School ...; the Outward Bound movement; the Duke of Edinburgh's Award ... and the United World Colleges' (Peterson 2003: 2).

The United World Colleges were designed as institutions that would bring together an international body of young people who would all study, play and live together for two years and so form bonds which would last into their

maturity and foster collaborations. As Alec Peterson, one of the architects of the International Baccalaureate, puts it: 'We sought not to produce a generation of rootless 'world citizens' but one of Americans, English, French, Germans, Mexicans, Russians and others, who understood each other better, sought to co-operate with each other, and had friends across frontiers' (Peterson 2003: 5). While such aspirations apply to all the IB programmes and to all disciplines, the emphasis on cross-cultural and inter-subjective understanding are particularly valuable in underpinning the teaching and learning of anthropology within the diploma.

For UWCs to succeed, a programme of study that was intellectually demanding in breadth and depth as well as one that fostered service to others and would be recognized by universities had to be devised. The result was the IB diploma, developed to meet the needs of UWCs and international schools by drawing together the best from already existing national systems.² To this end the range of subjects taught in the French baccalaureate was kept but combined with the depth of knowledge and specialism found in the British A-Level system.

The first schools to teach the IB programme included the first UWC Atlantic College in Wales, in the late 1960s. Official IB examinations for university entrance were first used by 29 students in 1970 (Peterson 2003: 31). Today there are some 1,700 schools around the world that teach the IB diploma of which more than half are state-funded schools. Additionally, over 300 schools worldwide are currently in the process of seeking diploma authorisation, with some 40 or so in the U.K. alone. In 2007 over 86,000 students around the world sat the diploma examinations. In the U.K. there are currently over 100 schools offering the diploma with over 3,000 candidates registered for the diploma examinations each year.

Despite these relatively buoyant numbers, at present only a handful of schools offering the IB Diploma Programme (DP) in the U.K.

regularly enter candidates for anthropology although this number is set to rise in the next few years as some of the schools seeking DP authorisation come on stream.³ Clearly one of the challenges for anthropology in the U.K. within the IB is to increase the number of schools that are aware of and able to teach it as a diploma subject.

The limited institutional uptake of anthropology in the U.K. is not the result of the discipline's newness as a diploma subject. Indeed, anthropology was one of the original subjects offered by the diploma programme. Nonetheless, the anthropology programme, despite a currently healthy growth rate, remains a relatively small one within the IB. By way of comparison, while some 1,275 candidates sat anthropology examinations in 2007, the figure for psychology was over 9,000 and for history almost 28,000. The challenge for anthropology within the IB Diploma Programme is competition with subjects that are better known and understood by parents, teachers and students. Within the diploma programme anthropology is a Group 3 subject along with economics, psychology, history, geography and business and management, as well as philosophy, Islamic history and information technology in global systems. When a school chooses subjects within this group it can opt for any of these instead of anthropology. However, it is also clear that when a school offers anthropology as an option this quickly becomes a popular choice.

The IB Diploma and the Place of Social and Cultural Anthropology as a 'Group 3' Subject

The Diploma Programme is a rigorous broad-based two-year pre-university course of study designed for students in the 16 to 19 age range and it is conceptualized diagrammatically by the IB as the hexagon in Figure 1.

As the IB explains, 'students are required to choose one subject from each of the six

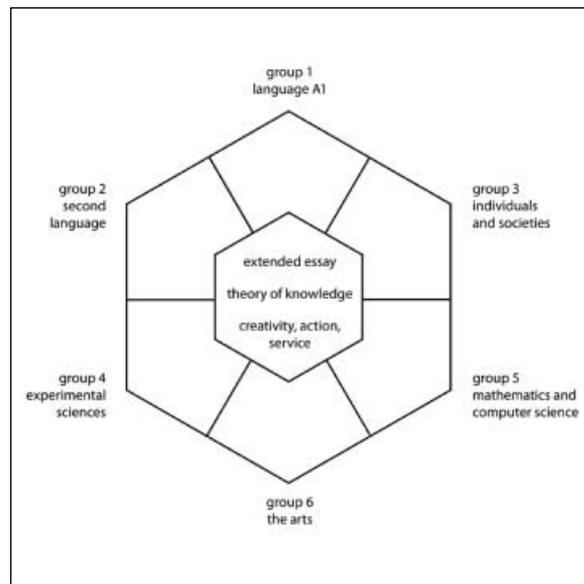


Figure 1: The IB Hexagon

academic areas, although they can choose a second subject from groups 1 to 5 instead of a group 6 subject. Normally, three subjects (and not more than four) are taken at higher level (HL), and the others are taken at standard level (SL)'. The tripartite core of the hexagon comprises the compulsory elements for all DP candidates. The extended essay which can be in any discipline enables students to investigate a topic of special interest that they have chosen themselves. It also encourages them to develop the skills of independent research that will be expected at university. 'Creativity, action, service' (CAS) involves students in experiential learning through a range of artistic, sporting, physical and service activities. The Theory of Knowledge (TOK) course is placed at the centre of the hexagon and is core to the DP. TOK encourages students to think about the nature of knowledge, to reflect on the process of learning in all the subjects they study as part of their DP course, and to make connections across the academic areas. Students are asked to consider how 'archival evidence, data collection, experimentation and observation, inductive and deductive reasoning, for example, can all be used to help explain patterns of behaviour and lead to knowledge claims'. They are

further 'required to evaluate these knowledge claims by exploring knowledge issues such as validity, reliability, credibility, certainty, and individual as well as cultural perspectives'. The relationship between Group 3 subjects and theory of knowledge is of 'crucial importance and fundamental to the Diploma Programme' (IB mission statement).

As the IB *Anthropology Guide* suggests, some of the areas and questions students might be led to explore by approaching the TOK essay through anthropology include the different criteria of validity and objectivity in the human and natural sciences; the limits on generalization and popular belief offered by particular ethnographic understanding; the relation of power, expert authority and knowledge; the relation of technology and knowledge; the relation of knowledge and cultural difference; and the difference between understanding and moral endorsement. If a student chose to study anthropology at higher level and write an extended essay in anthropology in addition to the compulsory 2,000-word field report, and further selected a focus on anthropological approaches in the TOK assessment, such a pre-university student would have gained a significant grounding in the discipline as preparation for more advanced studies in Higher Education.⁴

Each subject undergoes a curriculum review every seven years and the anthropology programme has just completed a three-year period of review. The curriculum review process involved many teachers of the programme from different regions of the world, different types of schools and university-based academics who were invited as external reviewers at various stages in the review process. To facilitate the attendance of a broad range of interested and suitably qualified individuals meetings were held at different times of the year in the U.K., U.S. and Argentina. The new curriculum began in September 2008 and the first cohort of students was examined in 2010.

IB Social and Cultural Anthropology Assessment, Aims and Objectives

As a Group 3 subject Anthropology can be taught at both standard and higher level (SL and HL). The assessment structure for anthropology is devised so as to meet the aims of the Group 3 'individuals and societies subjects' as a whole and also to meet specific disciplinary aims. This is set out in the general Group 3 aims which are to:

1. encourage the systematic and critical study of: human experience and behaviour; physical, economic and social environments; and the history and development of social and cultural institutions
2. develop in the student the capacity to identify, to analyse critically and to evaluate theories, concepts and arguments about the nature and activities of the individual and society
3. enable the student to collect, describe and analyse data used in studies of society, to test hypotheses, and to interpret complex data and source material
4. promote the appreciation of the way in which what has been learned is relevant to both the culture in which the student lives, and the culture of other societies
5. develop an awareness in the student that human attitudes and opinions are widely diverse and that a study of society requires an appreciation of such diversity
6. enable the student to recognize that the content and methodologies of the subjects in Group 3 are contestable and that their study requires the *toleration of uncertainty* [my emphasis].

The aims specific to the anthropology course at SL and HL are to enable students to:

7. explore principles of social and cultural life and characteristics of societies and cultures

8. develop an awareness of historical, scientific and social contexts within which social and cultural anthropology has developed
9. develop in the student a capacity to recognize preconceptions and assumptions of their own social and cultural environments
10. develop an awareness of relationships between local, regional and global processes and issues (IBO 2007: 6).

The key difference between these two levels is not simply the amount of time devoted to study and the number of ethnographies that students are expected to demonstrate a detailed knowledge of, but primarily the theoretical understanding that HL students need to demonstrate and which is not a requirement for SL students. The teaching goal of the Anthropology programme is to produce students who can demonstrate that they have understood and achieved the objectives of the programme in four key areas which are summarized as: knowledge and understanding; application and interpretation; synthesis and evaluation; and the selection and use of a variety of skills appropriate to social and cultural anthropology. Each of these areas is further broken down into a detailed set of sub-components but rather than list these as abstractions it may be more useful in the space available here to describe the way in which some of them are brought into play in actual pedagogical practice.

All students on the anthropology programme have to produce internally assessed work: an observation and critique for SL students and a 2,000 word field report utilising and evaluating anthropological research methods for the HL students. Students also have written examinations. All students take a comprehension exam and also an essay-based examination paper from which students have to select and answer two questions from a list of 10. The questions for this paper are the same at both SL and HL but the assessment criteria differ to reflect the different knowledge and skill levels expected between SL and HL candidates.

Finally, HL students only take an additional examination paper on anthropological theory in which candidates have to answer one question from a list of five. This summative assessment is comprehensive and intellectually demanding. It clearly favours those who are suited to formal examination-style assessments as found within quite specific educational traditions.⁵ Assessment is criterion-related (IBO 2004a: 7).

However, a good deal of what goes on in the classroom is inevitably formative, enabling students to learn by practice and from experience how to value, judge and critique the work of the anthropologists they read. As an example consider the SL observation exercise. Students are expected, in the first few weeks of beginning their anthropology course, to spend one hour observing social interactions and making notes on what they see. Students receive limited guidance from their teachers other than being told that they are not to interact with the people they observe and to observe with due regard for ethical conduct. Students may also be told that they can focus on a particular aspect of social interaction such as parent-child interactions.

Once the observation is completed students write up their observations in no more than 700 words. This immediately compels students to deal with issues of selectivity of data as they all have more than 700 words in their observation notes. The observations are then handed in to the teacher and not discussed for the next six months or so. During this time the students continue with their studies, reading and discussing ethnographies. At the end of the six-month period the teacher returns the observations to the students along with the assessment criteria for the critique of the observation and the students are then guided to produce a critique of their original observation. The goal is for students, by this point in their studies, to have developed a sense of what a sound anthropological observation consists of and have some discipline-specific

vocabulary and ethnographic examples with which to assess and evaluate their first attempt at the observation of social interaction.

Better students are able to assess the limitations of their original observations and to discuss the personal and ideological assumptions, value judgements and biases revealed in their observations. The impossibility of a 'pure' observation and the need to be explicit about just who the observer is and the location from which the observation took place (not just literally) are matters that the stronger candidates understand and can write about.

The work of this small-scale one hour observation, when done well, makes it possible for students to read ethnography with a keener eye and a better appreciation of the difficulties as well as the successes of conducting field-work and producing a written ethnography. The limitations of all observation, selection of data, the unavoidable assumptions and value judgements that find their way into the work of professional anthropologists are precisely the same issues that students confront very directly in their own work.

However, even before students are sent to undertake their observation many teachers set their students pre-observation exercises to attune them to the potential difficulties of something as apparently straightforward as 'observation'. One teacher asks her students to observe a member of the family brushing her/his teeth. The discussions that follow in the classroom reveal that either the student has faced a direct refusal and so has not been able to observe a member of the family brushing teeth, a ritual which it turns out is a highly privatized and personal matter in North America, or the student has been invited into a bathroom to watch a careful and rigorous flossing and perfect cleansing of each and every tooth. This is what the student has observed and is the 'truth' of the observation but the student also knows, intuitively and from experience, that this is not a typical tooth-brushing event. Students are thus directly faced either with the

failure to gain access to a 'field-site' or with the knowledge that what they have observed has been altered because of their presence. Experiencing this for themselves and discussing it in the classroom provides a short-cut to understanding some of the issues and frustrations all anthropologists face in the field. In this way the observation exercise at SL and the Field Report at HL encourage learning and understanding through doing and so seek to meet the goals of the IB in producing students who actively engage in the learning process.

I cannot, in a short article, discuss all the features of the IB anthropology assessments designed to foster critical thinking and higher level cognitive skills in students. However, I will limit myself to a description of the way in which assessments are designed to assess specific skills on the comprehension examination. This examination requires candidates to read and understand a passage taken from a recent ethnography. The examination has three questions. The first is always a descriptive question where candidates can gain full marks with a detailed and reasoned answer including relevant generalisations drawn from material found on the examination paper. The second question draws on material in the passage but requires the candidate to broaden her perspective with analysis and interpretation again drawn from the text but also introducing discipline-specific terminology and knowledge gained during the course of study. The third question is comparative and requires the candidate to compare the ethnographic example in the comprehension passage with ethnography the candidate has studied in detail in the classroom. Marks are awarded for demonstrating relevant similarities and differences in the two ethnographies and for HL candidates these differences may include the theoretical perspectives of the anthropologists themselves. Beginning with description and generalisation, working through to analysis and interpretation and then to comparison covers much of the work of professional anthropologists and sets

this in an ordered, achievable, if somewhat demanding, examination that hones the skills of students and trains them to produce coherent, well-ordered, contextualized and justified answers under examination conditions (IBO 2007: 28–29).

Although these skills are valued, it is recognized that at a pre-university level a focus on description and rewarding this in the assessment criteria is more suited to a cohort of students in their mid to late teens and this is why a significant proportion of the marks awarded on the assessments are for the level, relevance and detail of the ethnographic description a student can demonstrate. That there should be such a firm commitment to rewarding the knowledge and discussion of ethnographic data seems to me wholly right at the pre-university level and it is at the undergraduate level that the balance of knowledge can justifiably shift from detailed description and generalisation to the greater analytical and theoretical expectations lecturers have for student work.

As a consequence of the emphasis on ethnographic description, however, the careful selection of ethnographies to be studied in the classroom is central to the success of a course of study. The IB does not prescribe texts for teaching as different schools located in different countries and with diverse student bodies have differing needs. Books that may be taught without problem in one place may cause difficulties for schools in another and not all schools have the resources to replace or regularly update their ethnographic text collections. The IB encourages teachers to choose a variety of texts to present a broad overview of the range of work undertaken by anthropologists and of their varied interests. A classic ethnography, one that is in some way 'local' and therefore may be of direct interest to the students, coupled with others that may reflect a contemporary approach to ethnographic data collection and presentation, and perhaps an ethnography that reflects the interests and pre-existing knowledge of the teacher would

provide a representative set of texts for students to work from. So, for example, United Nations International School (New York) regularly teach Bourgois (2002), *In Search of Respect: Selling Crack in El Barrio*, which deals with a local and very negatively stereotyped ethnic community. This provides students with an insight into the lives and cultural understandings of fellow New Yorkers they might never come into direct contact with. The same school has recently also taught the very different work of Abu-Lughod (2000), *Veiled Sentiments: Honor and Poetry in a Bedouin Society*. Other teachers read ethnographies that are of interest to them such as Ortner (1999), *Life and Death on Mt. Everest: Sherpas and Himalayan Mountaineering*, currently taught by one teacher who enjoys the outdoor life. Another teacher who has conducted fieldwork in Ghana but works in Denmark makes sure her students are well aware of the culture and world views of modern Ghanaians. This flexibility in the choice of materials works well to draw on the strengths and interests of teachers as well as to reflect the specific mix of students in the classroom in geographical, religious, ethnic and other terms. These texts also need to include a sufficient range of core terms, themes and theoretical perspectives (for HL students) and topics to ensure that students have a sound coverage of the curriculum. IB teachers not only select the ethnographies university teachers would use but also expect IB students, with sufficient guidance and support, to read articles from professional anthropological journals and to incorporate this study into their work. When films or other visual media are used in the teaching of ethnography 'these must be treated in the same critical and reflective manner as the written ethnographies' (IBO 2007: 14).

Teachers and Teacher Support

It is self-evident that without good teachers no course of study, no matter how intrinsically

valuable or interesting, will succeed. Fortunately, with the increase in university courses offering anthropology in the last few years in the U.K. there is now an increasing body of graduates with a background in social anthropology who go on to take a Postgraduate Certificate in Education (a standard postgraduate teaching qualification in the U.K.). In this way the British expansion of anthropology graduates is beginning to match the much longer history of such graduates in the U.S.

However, an undergraduate degree or part-degree in anthropology, while to be encouraged, might be argued by some not to be the same as post-graduate field research and a doctorate in the discipline. Here again, the IB is fortunate currently to have several IB teachers with doctorates in anthropology, some of whom have taught, or continue to teach, in the university sector as well as at IB schools. This applies to schools in both the north and south. Yet others continue their own professional development with post-graduate degrees and some even manage to take sabbaticals to conduct anthropological fieldwork and pursue academic research.

This level of expertise and scope for continued development is not available to all and so the IB runs workshops for novice IB anthropology teachers as well as for more experienced teachers wishing to improve their knowledge and teaching of some aspect of the curriculum. However, these workshops are not held as frequently as we would like and practical issues (cost of attendance, negotiating time off work, etc.) mean that the number of teachers who can attend is always small. Online workshops providing training are now available to all teachers.

The IB has also set up the OCC (Online Curriculum Centre) to provide internet access for all teachers on the IB programmes to each other so that they can share both teaching concerns and good practice. Recognising that many teachers may be the only anthropologist in their school and that there may not be

others within easy access, the OCC provides a forum for posting questions, seeking advice and providing information that may be of benefit to other IB anthropology teachers. The OCC has proved to be an invaluable and popular resource. In addition, the IB seeks to support teachers directly with the production of Teacher Support Material (TSM), which also includes examples of marked internal assessments. For each component of the examination, scripts are selected, marked and the marking explained in an accompanying text which sets out the rationale for the marks awarded question by question and assessment criterion by assessment criterion.

There is also a school-specific report sent to all schools after each examination period outlining the achievements and limitations of the candidates in the internal assessments. These reports conclude with suggestions on how to improve the work of future candidates. In addition, the IB also seeks indirectly to support teaching and learning by producing and disseminating subject reports after each examination session. These reports are written by principal examiners and are compiled from the individual reports of assistant examiners. They provide detailed feedback on the general strengths and weaknesses of students in relation to the examinations, question by question, and provide guidance for the preparation of future candidates for examination.

At each grade award the past results of every school are available and a school that shows a significant decline in grade averages from one session to another may be followed up by IB administrators after the grade award to discover if there were any specific reasons for this and to ascertain how the IB might provide assistance to the school.

Current Challenges and Future Goals

The challenges which face the IB in general and anthropology specifically include the rapid

rate at which the IB is growing and the need to provide systems and structures which can oversee and manage this growth without compromising the values and standards of the IB. 'Since its inception some 40 years ago, the organization has grown by an average of almost 18% each year to its current size. Today, we offer three programmes, operate in over 120 countries and reach nearly half a million students' (IBO 2006a: 2). Ways of dealing with the strategic issues of the IB globally are set out in IBO (2004b). In the U.K. the number of students taking the IB instead of A-levels is up 40 per cent in two years (Baker 2009: 44). According to Richard Penrose, deputy head of diploma assessment, 'The rapid growth of IB is not restricted to U.K., it is happening worldwide ... There are a number of drivers of the growth in the U.K.: Recognition that the IB diploma pass rate and mean score have varied little over the past 30 years; perception of being less susceptible to political interference from government; anxiety about substantial changes being made to the national system; opportunity for high-flying IB students to demonstrate high performance that marks them out from their peers on the UCAS tariff.'⁶

In the U.S. it is anecdotally said that along with the IB comes 'status' and this may have something to do with the growth of the DP. As Dr John Geffroy notes on the subject of the popularity of the IB DP:

I have heard it from quite a few American teachers, as well as from workshop leaders, that the IB is attractive as a 'ready-made honors program', a relatively easy answer to parents' demands, particularly those in affluent suburban school systems, as well as parents of private schools students. Another aspect of this is that the IB is attractive also to public school districts planning 'magnet' schools, which often are schools with attractive programs, but located in lower-income areas, with the hope that students from more affluent areas will be attracted. This strategy is sometimes a deliberate attempt to break up residential racial segregation, and sometimes a

means to create cultural diversity, sometimes a political goal. Such magnet schools often also feature specialized foci, such as science and mathematics, international affairs, or arts and performance (Virginia, California, Oregon, Washington state and New York come to mind as areas where these efforts have been especially common).

There is also some awareness, often in these same magnet programs, of the need to foster critical thinking, rather than focusing on subject content, or 'teaching to the test'. This awareness predates the popularity of the IB, and I suspect is now even more desirable as an antidote to the same stress on examinations coming from the notorious 'no child left behind' approach supported by the federal government, which punishes schools who cannot show progress in results, measured of course by standardized exams.⁷

Some of these issues and concerns are, of course, also applicable to the U.K. context.

A 2003 report set out the results of a study into the perceptions of the IB DP at U.K. universities and institutions of higher education. It noted that out of all the respondents, '96% favoured the broader programme offered by the IB, and 97% were satisfied that DP students were well prepared for undergraduate courses. Indeed 57% thought students were advantaged by having done the DP with only 3% thinking DP students were disadvantaged' (*Perceptions of the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme* 2003: 27). This, however, should be set in the U.K. context of continued and often ill-considered media debate and speculation on the 'dumbing down' of the A-levels, the high proportion of students achieving top grades and the bureaucratic mishaps in the administration of the A-levels where any alternative to the beleaguered A-levels may be overvalued by comparison.⁸

Since the IB anthropology programme does not specify which ethnographies and textbooks should be used in teaching, the examination questions have to be broad enough to make it possible for all candidates to be able to answer questions so as to demonstrate their knowl-

edge level and skills while providing sufficient guidance to enable students to know what they are being asked to write about. This is a challenging task in itself and the rigorous process of setting examination papers takes some 18 months from commission to completion.

One specific challenge to the designers of the present anthropology curriculum was to encourage through the assessment the inclusion of ethnographies that dealt with contemporary social issues and changes, both substantively and also theoretically. This was achieved in the previous curriculum by dividing the second examination paper into two sections. Students had to answer one question from each section of the examination paper and the second section focused on questions that required a knowledge and understanding of recent processes of social transformation and change, such as globalisation, post-colonialism and transnationalism. The success of this strategy meant that the new curriculum no longer needs to divide paper 2 into sections. Students are now expected to demonstrate their knowledge of how ethnographic work has changed over the last century, what contemporary issues are of relevance and how older ethnographies are being re-thought, as a matter of course. Candidates who do this will be awarded marks recognising their achievement in the new assessment criteria.

In terms of the future of anthropology there is still some way to go before anthropology is considered as readily as economics or psychology when a school sets up its Group 3 subjects on the IB DP. This means networking to make sure that schools and parents are aware of the existence of the subject and even if they do know, from television or other sources, that anthropology is a university discipline that they also realize that it can be and is taught at the pre-university level.

There have been some successes in this respect. In 2000 the Aga Khan set up an ambitious scheme to provide Aga Khan Academies

as centres of educational excellence in Africa, South and Central Asia and the Middle East, and the first academy opened in Mombassa in 2003 (<http://www.akdn.org/academies>; Aga Khan 2008). These academies are self-consciously designed to produce internationally educated, multi-lingual, ethical and public-minded future leaders of the countries in which they are located and the IB programmes have been chosen as the educational model that will be followed in these academies. Simon Otieno, director of studies in the senior school in Mombassa, is keen to add anthropology to the school's diploma programme offerings for Group 3. Similar ambitions are in evidence elsewhere.

The picture is not, however, all positive. While it is the case that there are many teachers and parents interested in providing education to fit the coming generations for life in a global world there is also a backlash from those who are threatened by the internationalism of the IB and by the 'critical thinking' that an IB programme of study fosters.⁹

By Way of Conclusion

Far from agreeing with Rosemary Firth and some of my contemporaries who consider the study of anthropology to be too demanding and complex a discipline for pre-university students, I believe quite the opposite. It is precisely because the world is complex and because of the rapid rise of global technologies and media that young people need to be introduced to the approaches and knowledge base that anthropologists have gathered over more than a century. Further, this study should not be limited to students in private and international schools. It is something that all students in all schools can benefit from. Not only is it possible to teach anthropology to pre-university students, it is possible to teach any discipline to any student body if the teachers, students

and parents are challenged and motivated by the curriculum to succeed.

Acknowledgements

I wish to acknowledge the support, knowledge and advice of Richard Penrose, former social and cultural anthropology subject area manager and now deputy head of diploma assessment at the IB. Without his help this article could not have been written. I also wish to thank John Geffroy and Laura Fulton for their patient reading of drafts and their detailed and always helpful answers to my many questions about the IB and the UWCs.

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Notes

1. *IB Social and Cultural Anthropology Review International Consultation* (2004: 2). Note, however, that there is a clear distinction between the RAI committee on Anthropology in Secondary and Further Education and the present RAI Education Committee which works closely with teachers.
2. Under the auspices of the League of Nations the first international school was founded in Geneva in 1924. The International Schools Association was established in 1951 and in 1963 a grant from the U.S.-based 20th Century Fund was granted to establish the International Schools Examination Syndicate. In 1967 the International Baccalaureate came into existence.
3. At the summer 2009 grade award for anthropology several new British schools were noted as entering candidates for the first time. In addition, at an anthropology workshop held in Birmingham in the summer of 2009, seven of the ten participants were from six different British schools all about to start teaching anthropology as part of the DP (personal communication from John Geffroy the workshop convenor).
4. The IB is beginning to put systems in place to track how many students each year who take anthropology at IB level go on to do it at university. However, the teacher at a UWC in the U.S.A. with about 30 IB anthropology students a year estimates that perhaps 20–25 percent of his students will take at least one anthropology course at university and that about two each year will follow a university programme in anthropology. The teacher at a UWC in Canada estimates that in the last academic year some six out of 30 students went on to study anthropology at university. This, however, was an exceptional year and the figures vary considerably from year to year. I thank John Geffroy and Laura Fulton, respectively, for this information.
5. Despite this, students who come to the IB diploma programme without a background in formal assessment of this type still do well on the IB diploma. The two-year programme of study provides sufficient time for teachers to prepare students for the assessment even if they arrive, as some do, with a disrupted educational background as in the case of some of the students selected for UWCs from refugee camps.
6. Personal communication. See also, Demopoulos (2006): 'The IB was placed on a firm and equal footing with other qualifications in the U.K. over the summer when the university admissions service, UCAS, agreed for the first time to include it in its tariff system. ... The UCAS tariff system is significant because it awards scores to a range of different qualifications and enables them to be

compared. It values a common IB score of 30 as equivalent to 419 UCAS points, while a student with three grade As at A-level scores only 360. A top IB score of 45 scores 768 UCAS points, while an A-level candidate would need more than six grade As to achieve the same tariff.'

7. Personal communication.
8. Currently about 25% of A-level students achieve the highest grade, A. About 6–10% of IB anthropology students each year will achieve the highest grade, a 7, in the subject. On media debates about the relative merits of the IB vs A-levels see, for example, Ryan (2007) and Ryan (2002). For a less positive evaluation of the IB see, Briscoe and Boone (2006). And for the ongoing problems with the A-Levels, Baker (2009).
9. For example, from the group calling itself 'concerned citizens of the United States of America' at their 'The Truth about IB' website which describes the IB as Marxist, anti-American and a cult <<http://truthaboutib.com>>. See also Yates (2006), for a battle over the IB in American schools.

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