MYP Projects

The MYP is designed for students aged 11 to 16. It provides a framework of learning that encourages students to become creative, critical and reflective thinkers. The MYP emphasizes intellectual challenge, encouraging students to make connections between their studies in traditional subjects and the real world. It fosters the development of skills for communication, intercultural understanding and global engagement—essential qualities for young people who are becoming global leaders.

The MYP is flexible enough to accommodate the demands of most national or local curriculums. It builds upon the knowledge, skills and attitudes developed in the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) and prepares students to meet the academic challenges of the IB Diploma Programme (DP) and the IB Career-related Programme (CP).

The community project and the personal project are known together as MYP projects.

The *community project* focuses on community and service, encouraging students to explore their right and responsibility to implement service as action in the community. The community project gives students an opportunity to develop awareness of needs in various communities and address those needs through service learning. As a consolidation of learning, the community project engages in a sustained, in-depth inquiry leading to service as action in the community. The community project may be completed individually or by groups of a maximum of three students.

The *personal project* encourages students to practise and strengthen their approaches to learning (ATL) skills, to consolidate prior and subject-specific learning, and to develop an area of personal interest. The personal project provides an excellent opportunity for students to produce a truly personal and often creative product/outcome and to demonstrate a consolidation of their learning in the MYP. The project offers many opportunities for differentiation of learning and expression according to students' individual needs. The personal nature of the project is important; the project should revolve around a challenge that motivates and interests the individual student. Each student develops a personal project independently.

MYP projects are student-centred and age-appropriate, and they enable students to engage in practical explorations through a cycle of inquiry, action and reflection. MYP projects help students to develop the attributes of the IB learner profile; provide students with an essential opportunity to demonstrate ATL skills developed through the MYP; and foster the development of independent, lifelong learners.

The community project and personal project emphasize experiential learning, which is developed further in community and service in both the CP and DP. Through MYP projects, students experience the responsibility of completing a significant piece of work over an extended period of time, as well as the need to reflect on their learning and the outcomes of their work—key skills that prepare students for success in further study, the workplace and the community.

The IB continuum of international education provides a progression of learning for students aged 3–19. The following figure shows the IB continuum pathways to projects or culminating experiences across the four IB programmes.
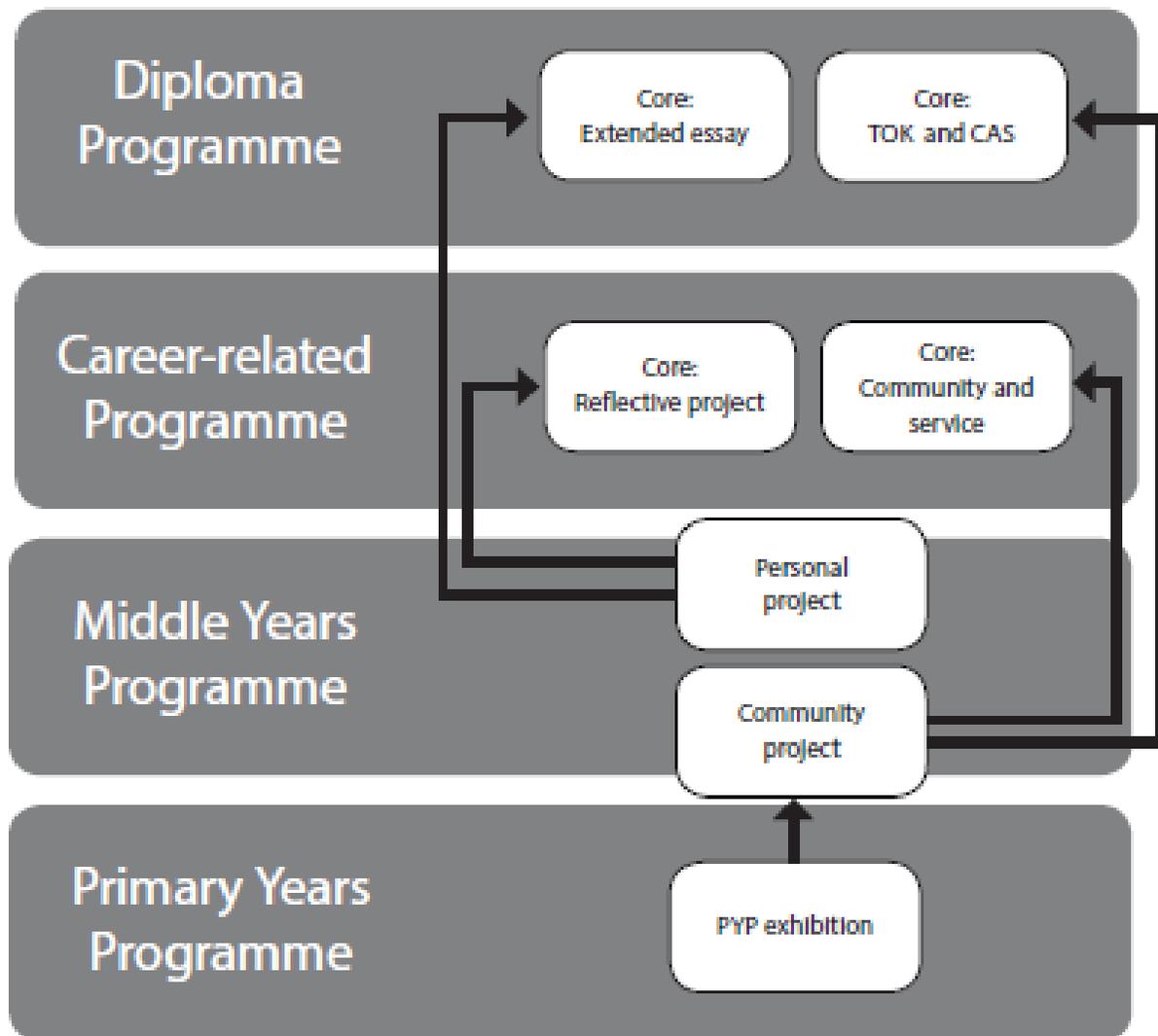
IB Continuum pathway to projects in the IB

The objectives of MYP projects encompass the factual, conceptual, procedural and metacognitive dimensions of knowledge.

The following table illustrates the distinct and overlapping objectives of the community project and personal project.

Community project objectives	Personal project objectives
Objective A: Investigating	
I. Define a goal to address a need within a community, based on personal interests	I. Define a clear goal and a global context for the project, based on personal interests
II. Identify prior learning and subject-specific knowledge relevant to the project	
III. Demonstrate research skills	
Objective B: Planning	
I. Develop a proposal for action to serve the need in the community	I. Develop criteria for the product/outcome
II. Plan and record the development process of the project	
III. Demonstrate self-management skills	
Objective C: Taking action	
I. Demonstrate service as action as a result of the project	I. Create a product/outcome in response to the goal, global context and criteria
II. Demonstrate thinking skills	
III. Demonstrate communication and social skills	
Objective D: Reflecting	
I. Evaluate the quality of the service as action against the proposal	I. Evaluate the quality of the product/outcome against their criteria
II. Reflect on how completing the project has extended their knowledge and understanding of service learning	II. Reflect on how completing the project has extended their knowledge and understanding of the topic and the global context
III. Reflect on their development of ATL skills	III. Reflect on their development as IB learners through the project

The community project and personal project are culminating examples of inquiry because they reflect students' ability to initiate, manage and direct their own inquiry.

The inquiry process in MYP projects involves students in a wide range of activities to extend their knowledge and understanding and to develop their skills and attitudes. These student-planned learning activities include:

- deciding what they want to learn about, identifying what they already know, and discovering what they will need to know to complete the project
- creating proposals or criteria for their project, planning their time and materials, and recording developments of the project

- making decisions, developing understandings and solving problems, communicating with their supervisor and others, and creating a product or developing an outcome
- evaluating the product/outcome and reflecting on their project and their learning.

As students become involved in the self-initiated and self-directed learning process, they will find it easier to construct in-depth knowledge on their topic as well as to develop an understanding of themselves as learners.

The following stages, illustrated in the figure below, provide a useful framework to develop the attributes of the learner profile. The fifth and final stage is "demonstration", which in MYP projects is the presentation or report.
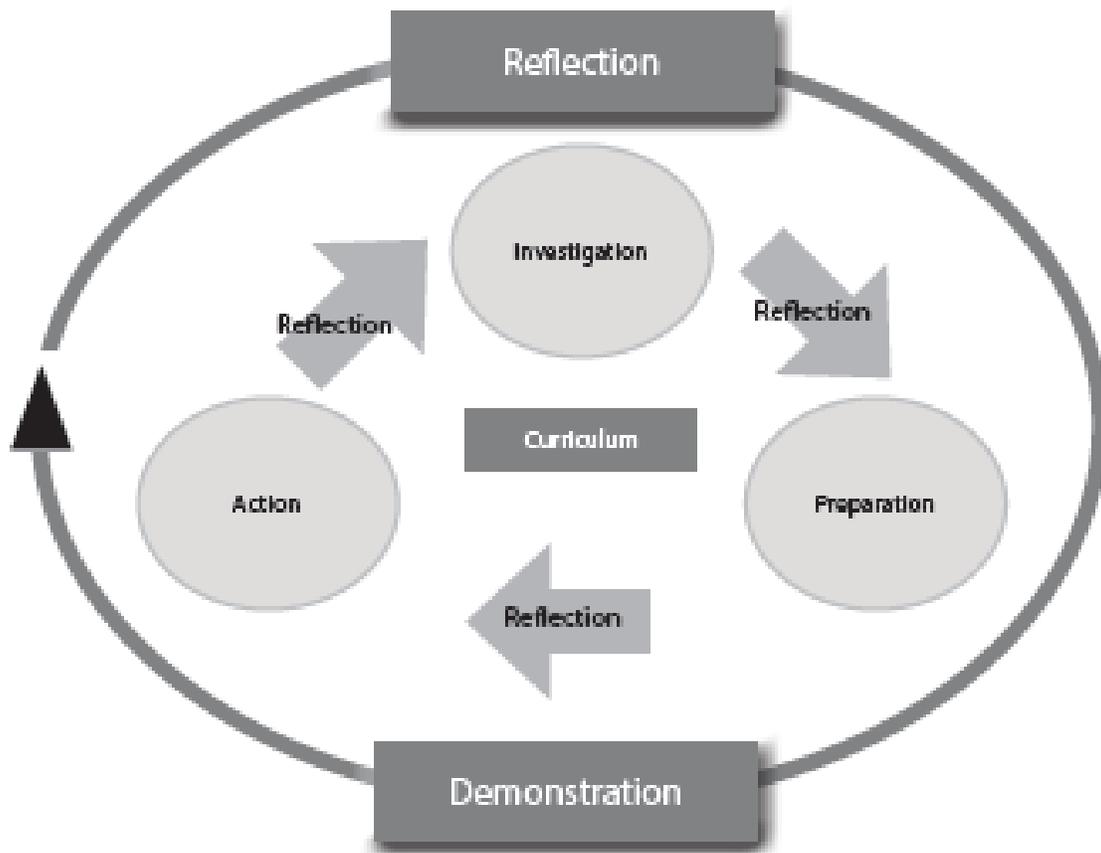
Following these five stages encourages and supports students' initiative as their choices and plans emerge from and advance their interests, skills, talents and knowledge. Action may differ slightly between the two MYP projects.

Community project: Service learning

In the community project, action involves a participation in *service learning* (service as action). As students evolve through the service learning process, they may engage in one or more types of action.

Direct service: Students have interaction that involves people, the environment or animals. Examples include one-on-one tutoring, developing a garden alongside refugees, or teaching dogs behaviours to prepare them for adoption.

Indirect service: Though students do not see the recipients during indirect service, they have verified that their actions will benefit the community or environment. Examples include redesigning an organization's website, writing original picture books to teach a language, or raising fish to restore a stream.

Advocacy: Students speak on behalf of a cause or concern to promote action on an issue of public interest. Examples include initiating an awareness campaign on hunger in the community, performing a play on replacing bullying with respect, or creating a video on sustainable water solutions.

Research: Students collect information through varied sources, analyse data and report on a topic of importance to influence policy or practice. Examples include conducting environmental surveys to influence their school, contributing to a study of animal migration patterns, or compiling the most effective means to reduce litter in public spaces.

Personal project: Principled action

In the personal project, action involves individual choices that extend MYP learning beyond knowledge and understanding to include not only socially responsible attitudes but also thoughtful and appropriate action, initiated and applied by the student as a result of the learning process. While the principled action in the personal project may not result in a specific form of service with the community, the inquiry process remains the same. Students' learning process in the MYP personal project involves action in a wide range of forms, including:

- developing an area of personal interest beyond the subject-specific curriculum
- sharing their new understandings with their peers, teachers and family
- changing their behaviour in response to their learning and recognizing that they are able to make a difference through the decisions they make and the things they do

The process of reflection should be carried out throughout the project, not just at the end. Students should be encouraged to reflect regularly on their inquiry process and on the actions they have taken at various stages of their project.

The development of the personal project will follow the same stages as the community project: investigating, planning, taking action, reflecting and demonstrating. In the case of the personal project, the report will become the demonstration of the first four stages: a summary of the students' processes of investigation, planning, actions and reflections.

Students must identify one of these global contexts for their MYP project, to establish the relevance of their inquiry (why it matters).

Students may consider the following questions as they choose a global context through which to focus their project.

- What do I want to achieve through my personal project?
- What do I want others to understand through my work?
- What impact do I want my project to have?
- How can a specific context give greater purpose to my project?

MYP projects are culminating activities through which students present, in a truly personal way, their development of approaches to learning (ATL) skills.

ATL skills that students have developed in subject groups will prepare them for working more independently and developing an MYP project over an extended period of time. Projects, essays and investigations carried out in the subject groups are important vehicles for helping students to develop the skills and attitudes needed to complete MYP projects.

ATL skills provide a solid foundation for learning independently and with others, demonstrating learning, and reflecting on the process of learning. They help students to become more autonomous, strategic and self-motivated and ultimately prepare students for responsible participation in local and global contexts.

The following table shows possible alignment between ATL skills and project objectives:

Community project objectives	Personal project objectives	MYP ATL skill clusters	
Objective A: Investigating			
I. Define a goal to address a need within a community, based on personal interests	I. Define a clear goal and a global context for the project, based on personal interests	Collaboration Critical thinking Creative thinking	
II. Identify prior learning and subject-specific knowledge relevant to the project III. Demonstrate research skills		Information literacy Media literacy Transfer	
Objective B: Planning			
I. Develop a proposal for action to serve the need in the community	I. Develop criteria for the product/outcome	Collaboration Organization Critical thinking Creative thinking	
II. Plan and record the development process of the project III. Demonstrate self-management skills		Collaboration Organization Reflection	Affective skills: Mindfulness, perseverance, emotional management, self-motivation and resilience
Objective C: Taking action			
I. Demonstrate service as action as a result of the project	I. Create a product/outcome in response to the goal, context and criteria	Organization Critical thinking Creative thinking	
II. Demonstrate thinking skills III. Demonstrate communication and social skills		Communication Collaboration Critical thinking Creative thinking Transfer	
Objective D: Reflecting			
I. Evaluate the quality of the service as action against the proposal	I. Evaluate the quality of the product/outcome against their criteria	Communication Reflection	
II. Reflect on how completing the project has extended their knowledge and understanding of service learning	II. Reflect on how completing the project has extended their knowledge and understanding of the topic and the global context		
III. Reflect on their development of ATL skills	III. Reflect on their development as IB learners through the project		

Documenting the process – the process journal

For both the community project and the personal project, students are expected to document their process in the process journal. In this way, students demonstrate their working behaviours and academic honesty.

The process journal is used to record progress maintained by the student throughout the project. However, the media for documenting the process can vary depending on student preferences. It can be written, visual, audio or a combination of these, and it may include both paper and electronic formats. In the use of electronic/digital media, students are strongly advised to make digital copies of their journals or to transmit copies of their journals to an online storage site.

The process journal is personal to the student, in the sense that he or she is also exploring ways of recording his or her process. Students are not restricted to any single model of recording their process journals. However, the student is responsible, through his or her use of the process journal, for producing evidence of addressing the four objectives to demonstrate achievement at the highest levels of the criteria.

The process journal is:	The process journal is not:
- used throughout the project to document its development - an evolving record of intents, processes, accomplishments - a place to record initial thoughts and developments, brainstorming, possible lines of inquiry and further questions raised - a place for recording interactions with sources, for example teachers, supervisors, external contributors - a place to record selected, annotated and/or edited research and to maintain a bibliography - a place for storing useful information, for example quotations, pictures, ideas, photographs - a means of exploring ideas and solutions - a place for evaluating work completed - a place for reflecting on learning - devised by the student in a format that suits his or her needs - a record of reflections and formative feedback received.	- used on a daily basis (unless this is useful for the student) - written up after the process has been completed - additional work on top of the project; it is part of and supports the project - a diary with detailed writing about what was done - a static document with only one format.

Assessment for the MYP personal project is criterion-related, based on four equally weighted assessment criteria as shown below.

Criterion A	Investigating	Maximum 8
Criterion B	Planning	Maximum 8
Criterion C	Taking action	Maximum 8
Criterion D	Reflecting	Maximum 8

In the MYP, objectives correspond to assessment criteria. Each criterion has eight possible achievement levels (1–8), divided into four bands that generally represent limited (1–2); adequate (3–4); substantial (5–6); and excellent (7–8) performance. Each band has its own unique descriptor that teachers use to make "best-fit" judgments about students' progress and achievement.