

Comparison between HKDSE and International A-level - Maths

The Edexcel International Advanced Level in Mathematics has a very flexible framework with options for candidates with different backgrounds and requirements. While the standard IAL in Mathematics consists of four modules - two compulsory modules (C12 and C34 together with two other modules of the candidate's choice), it is also possible for candidates to pursue the qualification of IAS Mathematics with only two modules – in this case, the compulsory C12 with one more of the candidate's choice. Alternatively, candidates may opt for the qualifications of A-level in Mathematics and A-level in Further Mathematics (2 A-levels' worth), where candidates are examined in ten modules – where candidates must choose either F2 or F3 (or both) in addition to the compulsory modules C12, C34 and F1.

The 12 modules are divided into different areas of mathematics: Core, Further Pure, Mechanics, Statistics and Decision Mathematics. Each module is examined in one examination paper where calculators are allowed and most modules are examined in both January and June, with the modules F2, F3 and S3 being the exceptions. The core modules are worth twice as much as the other modules, so that each core module is worth one third of an IAL while other modules are each worth one sixth. Correspondingly, the examination time for the Core modules is 2.5 hours, as opposed to 1.5 hours for all other modules.

Candidates may choose option modules from one area (S1+S2) or across different areas (M1+S1) depending on their mathematical background and aspirations.

The following table illustrates the approximate proportion (in teaching time) of each IAL module taught in the HKDSE.

	Compulsory	Compulsory+M1	Compulsory+M2
C12	60%	85%	85%
C34	10%	40%	75%
F1	5%	5%	35%
F2	0%	0%	0%
F3	0%	0%	20%
M1	0%	0%	0%
M2	0%	0%	0%
M3	0%	0%	0%
S1	30%	70%	30%
S2	0%	25%	0%
S3	0%	30%	0%
D1	0%	0%	0%

As an example, a HKDSE candidate who chooses the DSE option module M1, can pursue the IAL in Mathematics with options S1 and S2 – where over 50% of the topics for the IAL has already been learnt. ($1/3 \times 85\% + 1/3 \times 40\% + 1/6 \times 70\% + 1/6 \times 25\%$)

In a different example, a HKDSE candidate who chooses the DSE option module M2 can pursue the IAL in Mathematics with options F1 and F3 – where over 60% of the topics for the IAL has already been learnt. ($1/3 \times 85\% + 1/3 \times 75\% + 1/6 \times 35\% + 1/6 \times 20\%$)

Note: IAL modules must normally be chosen “in order” so that M2 can only be chosen if M1 is, while M3 is also dependent on M2. The same is true for S1, S2 and S3, but, in the case for the Further Pure modules, F3 is only dependent on F1 and not on F2.

If you have further enquiries, please contact ITS at +852 2116 3916 or by email at info@itseducation.asia. ITS Education Asia is a full Edexcel academic centre in Hong Kong (Centre Number 92885). Further consultation is completely free of charge. You might also refer to the following FAQ page from ITS Education Asia <http://www.itseducation.asia/UK-faqs.htm>

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