



Approaches to teaching and learning in the Diploma Programme: Reflection tool

This tool has been designed to help Diploma Programme (DP) teachers “audit” and reflect upon approaches to teaching and learning in their classrooms. It is intended as a tool to help individual teachers reflect on their current practice, as well as a way to promote and stimulate discussion between colleagues within and across departments.

This tool consists of two sections.

Section 1: Approaches to learning

This section consists of five elements: thinking skills, communication skills, social skills, self-management skills, and research skills.

When answering these questions teachers should focus on their experience in their classroom with their DP students. The questions will ask teachers to think about **a recent unit/topic** they taught their DP students, and ask them to indicate how often they provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular skill or behaviour.

Section 2: Approaches to teaching

This section consists of six elements: teaching through inquiry, teaching through concepts, teaching developed in local and global contexts, teaching focused on effective teamwork and collaboration, teaching differentiated to meet the needs of all learners, and teaching informed by assessment.

When answering these questions teachers should focus on their experience in their classroom with their DP students. The questions will ask teachers to think about **a recent unit/topic** they taught their DP students, and ask them to indicate how often they utilised particular teaching strategies.

There are good reasons why particular approaches or strategies may not be used or may not be appropriate for a particular unit. However, regular use of this tool can help teachers to identify patterns in their use, or lack of use, of a particular approach across multiple units.



1. a) Thinking skills

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
ask students to formulate a reasoned argument to support their opinion or conclusion?					
give students time to think through their answers before asking them for a response?					
reward a new personal understanding, solution or approach to an issue?					
ask open questions?					
set students a task which required higher-order thinking skills (such as analysis or evaluation)?					
build on a specific prior task?					
help students to make their thinking more visible (for example, by using a strategy such as a thinking routine)?					
require students to take an unfamiliar viewpoint into account when formulating arguments?					
ask questions that required the use of knowledge from a different subject from the one you are teaching?					
include a reflection activity?					
make a link to TOK?					



1. b) Research skills

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
require students to formulate/construct a focused research question (either in class or in a homework assignment)?					
reward or encourage correct citing and referencing?					
assign a task that required students to use the library?					
require students to practise effective online search skills (for example, use of Booleans and search limiters)?					
provide opportunities for students to reflect on how they determine the quality of a source, or analyse contradictory sources?					
require students to record their search for sources in steps (types of search engines, search terms, and so on)?					
give students advice on (or provide an opportunity for students to practise) narrowing the scope of a task to make it more manageable?					
discuss or model the importance of academic honesty and clear acknowledgment of sources?					



1. c) Communication skills

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
ask students to explain their understanding of a text or idea to each other?					
construct a task around the use of different vocabulary and examples when speaking to different audiences?					
have students give an oral presentation without reading from their notes?					
ask students to monitor and check the quality of their writing?					
construct a task so that students practise their listening skills?					
assess or give feedback on speaking or writing concisely?					
provide opportunities for students to read and understand different types of texts?					
encourage or require students to plan a response before they begin?					
ask students to formulate arguments clearly and coherently?					
encourage all students to contribute to discussions?					



1. d) Social skills

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
have students work in small groups?					
allocate, or ask students to allocate among themselves, different roles in a classroom discussion or activity?					
have students peer assess their group performance or process?					
support students in resolving a conflict in a team?					
give a group assessment task?					
give students feedback on how they worked as a group?					
have students discuss their understanding of a text or idea among themselves and come up with a shared understanding?					
provide an opportunity for students to analyse the impact of their behaviour on the class or on a group performance?					
encourage students to consider alternative points of view or to take the perspective of others?					
provide opportunities for students to make decisions?					



1. e) Self-management skills

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
set deadlines for students to meet?					
require students to revise and improve on work previously submitted?					
ask students to set their own learning goals?					
ask students to break down a larger task into specific steps?					
ask students to look for personal relevance in the subject matter?					
practise or discuss strategies to increase concentration?					
give students feedback on their approach to a task?					
model positive skills and behaviours such as being well organized and punctual?					
help students to learn from failures or mistakes?					
create an atmosphere where students do not think they have to get everything right first time?					
discuss planning and approaches to revision?					



2.a) Teaching based on inquiry

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
ask students to find their own information about a topic?					
provide opportunities for students to make proposals and/or decisions?					
encourage students to build on existing knowledge and experiences?					
adopt a student-centred approach?					
try to ensure that students actively engage with the learning?					
provide opportunities for reflection?					
see your role as being to promote questions, not just to provide answers?					
support students in identifying and accessing resources?					
encourage students to take increased responsibility for their own learning?					
act as a facilitator?					
situate inquiries within local and global contexts?					



2. b) Teaching focused on conceptual understanding

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
identify central concepts in your planning and in lessons?					
help students to see the “big ideas” behind a topic?					
encourage students to make connections between new knowledge and old knowledge?					
encourage students to transfer their learning to new contexts?					
identify opportunities for students to make links to concepts being covered in other subjects (as a result of discussions with colleagues to establish which concepts they are exploring)?					
ground discussion of abstract concepts in real-life examples or case studies?					
encourage students to use tools such as concept maps?					
help students to see patterns and connections?					
pose a variety of different types of questions—factual, conceptual and debatable?					



2. c) Teaching developed in local and global contexts

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
encourage students to draw on insights from their own individual experiences and backgrounds?					
make reference to real-life examples from current affairs?					
promote opportunities for students to develop intercultural understanding?					
encourage students to be globally engaged?					
help students to see the “big picture” relevance of what they are studying?					
try to ground abstract concepts in real-life examples?					
explore contemporary global concerns such as development, conflict, rights, and the environment?					
help students to appreciate the complexity and uncertainty associated with an issue or idea?					
encourage students to see an issue/idea from multiple perspectives?					



2. d) Teaching focused on effective teamwork and collaboration

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
include group activities such as debates, role plays or group projects?					
encourage students to feel comfortable asking questions when they don't understand?					
try to be more of a "meddler in the middle" than a "sage on the stage"?					
provide an opportunity for students to develop or expand on the idea of another student?					
encourage all students to share information and ideas?					
utilise technology as a way to encourage teamwork and collaboration?					
provide opportunities for students to assume shared responsibility for collaborative work?					
encourage students to be respectful of other students during discussions?					
encourage "active listening" by asking a student to rephrase something they hear in their own words?					



2. e) Teaching differentiated to meet the needs of all learners

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
set high but realistic expectations for all learners?					
promote an environment that welcomed all learners?					
utilise the diversity of cultural perspectives present in your classroom?					
try to activate students' prior knowledge?					
present ideas or information in different media/formats?					
enable every student to achieve personal learning goals?					
try to make the lesson as attractive, accessible, and relevant as possible for your students?					
include open/extension activities to challenge gifted and talented students?					
think about your students as individual learners?					
make use of visual aids to support new learning?					
make use of collaborative learning groups or peer support?					



2. f) Teaching informed by assessment (formative and summative)

*Note: When answering these questions you should focus on your experience in your classroom with your DP students. The questions will ask you to think about **a recent unit/topic** you taught your DP students, and ask you to indicate how often you provided opportunities for students to demonstrate a particular behaviour associated with an ATL skill.*

In your most recent unit/topic, how often did you:

	In almost every lesson	In the majority of lessons	In an occasional lesson	Not in this unit/topic	Unsure
provide individual feedback to students on a piece of work?					
give evidence-based feedback on a task?					
use information from a formative assessment task to amend/update your planning for the rest of the unit?					
ask students to give peer feedback on an assessment task?					
use a task to gain insight into students' particular strengths and weaknesses?					
set students an assessment task which required collaboration?					
provide opportunities for students to reflect on the assessment of their work?					
ask students to revise and improve on work previously submitted?					
help students to understand the command terms they will be faced with in DP examinations?					
set clear objectives for an assessment task?					
ensure that students clearly understand the criteria for a task?					