IB alumni successfully use critical thinking skills

Researchers at the University of Western Sydney implemented two widely used measures [the California Critical Thinking Disposition Inventory and the Self-Efficacy for Critical Thinking Scale] to assess and compare critical thinking skills of DP graduates and non-DP graduates who were completing their first year of university study. In comparing the two groups, researchers found that:

- DP alumni demonstrated more confidence in their ability to use critical thinking skills than non-IB students, to a statistically significant degree.
- DP graduates out-scored non-DP graduates in all three measures which appraised their post-secondary success. On each measure, differences between the mean scores of the two groups were statistically significant, with IB students expressing greater confidence in the outcomes of their marks and in their ability to complete their university studies.
- DP graduates scored significantly higher on average on the Australia Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR) than their non-IB peers. Their high ATAR scores allowed DP graduates greater freedom in choosing a university.

DP students learn critical thinking

Australian DP students enrolled in TOK were assessed with the Critical Thinking Strategies Scale to determine their use of critical thinking skills when confronted with new information. IB students enrolled in TOK demonstrated that they:

- Were more than ‘moderately likely’ to use a range of critical thinking skills.
- Had achieved a clear gain in Year 12 in their critical thinking skills from Year 11.
- Scored toward the higher end of the measurement scales in using critical thinking skills.
- Used an array of critical thinking skills in Year 12.