

CURRICULUM, PROGRESS, AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

POLICY ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

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Leadership Lead:	CEO/Principal
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CURRICULUM

GEMS World Academy provides a curriculum that has been created to promote a balanced academic programme, intentionally designed for each stage of a child's developmental learning journey. Students engage in a range of academic subjects and learning experiences that promote conceptual learning through inquiry-based learning.

Students in our Primary Years Programme (PYP) engage in learning experiences that build on the concepts in each subject area and make connections, exploring relationships in the world in which they live. Subject areas include; English, Maths, Science, Arabic, French/Spanish, Music, Physical and Health Education, and Visual Arts.

Students in our Middle Years Programme (MYP) continue to build on their knowledge and skills through inquiry-based learning in the academic disciplines of; Language and Literature (English and Arabic), Mathematics (Mathematics, Mathematics Extended), Language Acquisition (English B, French and Spanish), Science (Physics, Chemistry Biology, and Integrated Science), Individuals and Societies (Integrated Humanities and Business Management), Design Technology (Food Technology, Material Design, Digital Design), The Arts (Visual Arts, Music, Drama and Dance), Physical and Health Education, and Islamic.

Students in our Senior School extend their conceptual learning in preparation for completing their secondary education in six academic disciplines within the IBDP, Courses, and High School diploma pathway. Students select from a range of subjects; Language and Literature (English, Self Taught, and Arabic), Language Acquisition (French, Spanish, and English B), Individuals and Societies (Business Management, Economics, Global Politics, Psychology, and ESS), Sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Design Technology, Computer Science, Sports Science, and ESS), Mathematics (Mathematics: Analysis and Approaches; Mathematics: Applications and Interpretation), The Arts (Music, Theatre and Visual Arts). Students will also complete IBDP core elements in Theory of Knowledge, Extended Essay, and Creativity, Action and Service (CAS).

The following areas of learning are promoted across the whole curriculum:

- The IB Learner Profile
- Approaches to Learning
- Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE)
- Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Environmentalism (EIE)
- MOE Moral, Social, Cultural Studies
- Islamic Education (Arabic and English instruction) – Islamic students only
- Cross Curricular Studies (see IB Programme details for more information)
- Mother Tongue (16 Languages) – available based on placement tests

GEMS World Academy (GWA) has a 4.5-day instructional timetable. The number and duration of lessons are adjusted to meet the different development learning needs ranging from PreK to the Grade 12 IB programme of instruction.

NURSERY AND EARLY YEARS PROGRAMME

The GWA Nursery offers a Reggio inspired programme from age 2 year, leading into an IB programme from age 3. It is a full day programme from 8am - 3:15pm, with an optional early pick up of 1:30pm available. Students within the Nursery programme explore and learn skills through play-based instruction in the developmental areas of; Communication and Language, Physical Development, and, Personal, Social and Emotional Development. GWA places students in age appropriate grade levels in accordance with the KHDA. The IB programmes allow for a greater degree of academic differentiation and therefore, we rarely accelerate children into higher grades, nor retain children in a lower year group.

PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME (PYP) – PREK TO KG2

CURRICULUM AREA	LESSONS
Integrated English (Phonics, Literature and Stories)	10
Integrated Mathematics	5
Unit of Inquiry	5
Single Subjects (PE, Music, Visual Art, Swimming, Arabic Studies/French/Spanish)	9
Interventions	1
Islamic (Optional for KG1 and KG2)	2

PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME (PYP) – GRADE 1

Curriculum Area	Lessons
Language Arts	7
Mathematics	5
Unit of Inquiry (Integrated Science and Moral, Social, Cultural Studies)	5
Arabic Language A (Arabic B)	5 (4)
Moral, Social & Cultural Studies (MSCS: Stand alone)	1
Single Subjects (PE, Music, Visual Art, Swimming, Language B)	5
Islamic Education A (Arabic Instruction) and B (English Instruction) / Mother Tongue (twice per week)	3
Assembly	1

PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME (PYP) – GRADES 2 - 3

Curriculum Area	Lessons
Language Arts	5
Mathematics	5
Unit of Inquiry (Integrated Science and Moral, Social, Cultural Studies)	5
Arabic Language A (Arabic B)	5 (4)
Moral, Social & Cultural Studies (MSCS: Stand alone)	1
Single Subjects (PE, Music, Visual Art, Swimming, Strings, Language B)	6
Islamic Education A (Arabic Instruction) and B (English Instruction) / Mother Tongue (twice per week)	3
Interventions (Non-Arabic A Students)	1 (2)
Assembly/Digital Technology Rotation	1

PRIMARY YEARS PROGRAMME (PYP) – GRADES 4 - 5

CURRICULUM AREA	Lessons
Language Arts	5
Mathematics	5
Arabic Language A and B	4
Unit of Inquiry	4
Stand Alone (Science, Moral, Social & Cultural Studies)	2
Single Subjects (PE, Music, Visual Art, Swimming, Strings)	5
French/Spanish (Grade 4: 1 / Grade 5: 2)	1/2
Islamic Education A (Arabic Instruction) and B (English Instruction) / Mother Tongue	2
Interventions (Maths & Language Arts) & Assembly	3

MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME (MYP) – GRADES 6 TO 8

CURRICULUM AREA	LESSONS/ Week
English	4
Math	4
Science	4
I&S	3
MFL (Spanish or French Choice)	3
Design (Food, Digital, Product Rotation)	3
Art (V.Art, Music Rotation with Drama/Dance Choice)	3
Arabic A&B	4
Islamic/ MT/ SH Pathways	2
PE	2

MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME (MYP) – GRADE 9

CURRICULUM AREA	LESSONS/ Week
English	4
Math	4
Humanities	4
Arabic A/B	4
MFL or Arabic A Interventions	3
Science	3
E-Portfolio Subject (Arts, Design, or PE)	3
Additional Elective (Additional Science, Business, or E-Portfolio subject)	3
Islamic/ MT/ SH Pathways	2
Core	1
Wellness	1

MIDDLE YEARS PROGRAMME (MYP) – GRADE 10

CURRICULUM AREA	LESSONS/ Week
English	4
Math	4

Humanities	4
Arabic A, French, or Spanish	4
Science	4
E-Portfolio Subject (Arts, Design, or PE)	4
Additional Elective (Additional Science, Business, or E-Portfolio subject)	4
Islamic/ MT/ SH Pathways	2
Core	1
Wellness	1

IB DIPLOMA PROGRAMME (IBDP) – GRADES 11 AND 12

CURRICULUM AREA	LESSONS/CYCLE
Theory of Knowledge (ToK)	2
Core (CAS & Extended Essay)	1
Group 1 Language and Literature (HL or SL)	HL 5, SL 4
Group 2 Language Acquisition (HL or SL)	HL 5, SL 4
Group 3 Individuals and Societies (HL or SL)	HL 5, SL 4
Group 4 Sciences (HL or SL)	HL 5, SL 4
Group 5 Mathematics (HL or SL)	HL 5, SL 4
Group 6 The Arts (HL or SL)	HL 5, SL 4
Islamic Education A (Arabic instruction) and B (English instruction)	2

*IBDP students must select a course from each group with the exception of Group 6, where a second Group 3 or Group 4 course can be selected instead. IB Diploma students must complete 3 HL courses and complete all IB Core elements.

**IB Courses students can select all SL courses – one from each group with the exception of Group 6, where a second Group 3 or Group 4 course can be selected instead.

CURRICULUM REVIEW

The curriculum at GWA is reviewed, revised and adapted on a yearly basis to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all students. In addition to minor adaptations, full curriculum reviews are carried on a three year cycle and overseen by respective Directors of Learning and Assistant Principals for Curriculum, Progress and Assessment.

ALTERNATIVE CURRICULUM PATHWAYS

GWA also provides students with a high school diploma that is recognised by CIS and NEASC accreditation bodies. Students may elect not to sit IB World Exams and instead graduate with GWA – High School Diploma by meeting school-based assessment criteria.

Students of Determination who require an alternative curriculum can achieve certification through the recognised ASDAN curriculum at either; Bronze, Silver or Gold.

TUTOR PROGRAMME

Secondary Form Time classes meet every day for 15 minutes.

- 1x15 min curriculum lessons covering; aspects of the MOE Moral, Social, and Cultural Curriculum, next day reminders, attendance, homework, rewards and sanctions are reviewed

EVENTS, VISITS AND ENRICHMENT DAYS

The curriculum is enhanced and reinforced by students participating in learning by attending field trips and excursions outside of the Academy campus. Local, national and international events are celebrated and planned within the curriculum (e.g. Science Fairs, Souqs, Social Impact Challenge). Students are able to compete in academic competitions as well as innovative and entrepreneurial events that promote application of their learning.

CLASSES

GWA believes in a variety of grouping strategies to support learning in mixed ability groups. Classes are carefully constructed to provide a balance of learning and social groupings.

EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

GWA is committed to offering a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Students have the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of sporting teams and language classes. The Enrichment Activities timetable is available for student selections three times a year.

Example Activities

- Olympiad clubs
- The Scribe Literary magazine
- Sports clubs and teams
- Lego Club
- Model United Nations
- Mad Science

ASSESSMENT

ASSESSMENT, A DEFINITION: THE EVALUATION OF A STUDENT'S ACHIEVEMENT

We assess students' work to ensure they make progress. Assessment is likely to be different in different subjects. In all subjects, it is not just about the content; it is about the learning process and how to effectively communicate what we learn and how we learn it. Teachers assess using a range and balance of assessment tools and strategies in a context which is both relevant and motivating for students. Assessment forms an integral part of the planning/assessment/reporting cycle and monitors the progress of student learning and achievement. It also determines the effectiveness of teaching, informs curriculum and assessment review.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

GWA values the use of a **range** of assessment strategies during the programme, including formative (assessment for learning) and summative (assessment of learning) assessments. Assessing students' prior knowledge and understanding as well as monitoring their achievement during the teaching period will enable teachers to plan and refine their teaching accordingly.

Strategies for assessment could include:

- Observation
- Performance assessments
- Process focused assessments
- Selected responses
- Open ended tasks
- Student self-assessment and peer assessment

ASSESSMENT TASKS

Assessment tasks should be designed to allow students to demonstrate their understanding through a variety of modes of communication. Offering students choice in how they would like to present their understanding can lead to a higher level of student engagement and success in demonstrating understanding and should be considered whenever possible. Assessment tasks value the process of thinking and may be evidenced through products, performances and student actions including yet not limited to:

- Compositions
- Investigations
- Research
- Performances
- Presentations through various media
- Learning Journals
- Reflections
- Tests/Quizzes

ASSESSMENT TOOLS

The above tasks may be assessed using the following tools:

Anecdotal records: brief written records based on observations of students. May include quotes from students

Continuums: visual representations of developmental stages of learning.

Students are plotted on continuums based on teacher's assessment data

Rubrics: an established set of criteria for rating students in all areas

Exemplars: samples of students' work that serve as concrete standards against which other samples are judged

Checklists: lists of information, data, attributes or elements that should be present. A mark scheme is a type of checklist

ASSESSMENT PROTOCOLS

We are constantly monitoring and recording student progress and achievements in our Managebac and Isams platforms. It is important that all staff adhere to the deadlines for submission of data to ensure assessments are rigorously moderated, analysed and grades reported to parents and carers. The Middle Leadership Team will need the data to support their identification of students and/or groups of students for interventions.

GWA administers a number of different summative examination sessions throughout the academic year according to the following table.

Exam Session	Grade Levels	Exam type
September exams	Grade 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 11	CAT4
	Grades 3-10	NGRT Reading Test
January exams	Grades 3-10	NGRT Reading Test (Grades 2-9)
	Grades 12	Mock exams
May exams	Grade 12	Grade 12 World Exams
	Grade 11	Grade 11 Mock Exams
June exams	Grades 3-10	NGRT GL Progress Tests
	Grade 9	Grade 9 Mock Exams
	Grade 10	Grade 10 Final Exams

ASSESSMENT FOR LEARNING: FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Formative assessment focuses on assessment as an essential learning process. Assessment instruments primarily designed for formal assessment at the end of the course should also be adapted and used formatively as part of the learning process. (IB 2010)

Given that the purpose of formative assessment is to improve student learning, all formative assessments should be returned to students prior to any summative assessment being completed. A student receiving their formative assessment after a summative has been completed largely defeats the scaffolding purpose of the formative assessment.

ASSESSMENT OF LEARNING: SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT

Summative assessment is concerned with measuring student learning against stated learning outcomes and objectives. Teachers must be aware of the principles and practices that the IB uses to conduct summative assessments, and ensure reliable results in accordance with IB guidelines. Summative and formative assessments are, therefore, inherently linked and teachers must use their knowledge of IB summative assessment expectations and practices to provide students with the opportunities to consolidate their learning through formative assessment practices.

ASSIGNING AN ASSESSMENT ACTIVITY

In Secondary, all formative and summative assessments must be posted on Managebac at the start of the academic year. Any changes to these dates must be done so a minimum of two weeks prior to the assessment.

All summative assessments must be accompanied with a Task Specific Criterion Sheet. A sample can be found [here](#).

ASSESSMENT MODERATION

All summative assessments will be moderated prior to reporting. GWA views moderation as a method of facilitating accurate assessment. In addition, as noted by the IB (2010) "Teacher collaboration is essential where more than one teacher is involved in teaching the course, schemes of work must be developed collaboratively."

All summative assessments must be moderated in the following manner:

- Teachers should exchange a "low", "medium" and "high" sample for a colleague(s) to moderate
- Teachers should not reveal to their colleague the grades they have given the samples, this will ensure a more authentic moderation process
- Following discussion of the moderation, teachers record the original grade and the moderated grade appropriately for the IB programme
- Moderation should be filed year-on-year to support standardization for newly appointed staff members and to be used to model grade descriptors for incoming students.

This process should be recorded after each moderation session. A sample moderation template for Secondary can be found [here](#). Primary moderation document found [here](#).

ASSESSMENT ACCOMMODATIONS

GWA teachers must implement the recommendations of each SEND student's Individual Education Plan (IEP) or Learning Support Document (LSD) to its fullest extent. The IEP or

LSD are developed based on the accommodations permitted and approved by the IB as a result of educational psychology, medical reports, and/or testing. Testing provisions indicated in the LSD will extend through to World Exams, in this way students will be tested throughout the programme in the same way they will be tested at the end of the programme. See the [Inclusion Policy](#) for further details on approaches to teaching and assessment for SEND students.

GWA teachers must implement the recommendations for students identified as requiring support based on English being an Additional Language (EAL) through the WIDA assessment. Accommodations align with the IB access arrangements, and are determined by WIDA results and recorded in a student's Individual Language Plan (ILP).

GRADING AND REPORTING

GRADING

GWA Primary school uses a grade descriptor to identify students' performance outcomes. GWA Secondary school uses scores from 1-7 in MYP and DP along with level descriptors to report progress, attitudes for learning, SA, PP, EE, and CAS. TOK uses letter grading from A-E.

ARRIVING AT A GRADE

Arriving at a grade for a report will be primarily based on summative assessments, though formative assessments will also help to inform teachers of student progress, especially when it is difficult to decide between two grade levels.

THE "BEST-FIT" APPROACH TO ASSESSMENT

The best-fit approach relies on teachers using outcomes-based assessment practices effectively. When assessing a student's work, teachers should assess each strand/outcome/criterion individually until they reach a descriptor that describes an achievement level that the work being assessed has not attained. Once this has been completed for each strand/outcome/criterion being assessed, an overall picture of the student's achievement will emerge.

Where it is not clearly evident which overall grade should be awarded, teachers must use their judgment to select the grade that best matches the student's work overall. The "best-fit" approach allows teachers to select the achievement level that best describes the piece of work being assessed. It is important to remember when doing so that a student does not have to achieve against all of the strand/outcomes/criterion to be awarded an overall level in that subject.

REPORTING

In Secondary School, all grades must be reported on Managebac within two weeks of receiving the assignment. This must be complete with impactful and actionable feedback.

Termly report grades give students, parents, teachers, Academy leaders and Governors clear information about the progress of students towards curriculum outcomes for the end of the academic year (IBDP, IBCP for the end of the programme). Teachers determine this grade by considering a broad range of assessments: the results of recent quizzes or tests; the quality of work completed in students' books; the quality of homework; the results of practical assessments; the results of assessed presentations or project work. In subjects where results are determined for the most part by terminal examination, assessment types should reflect

this in earlier grade levels, since the students' ability to demonstrate what they know and can do under examination is what is ultimately being tested.

MYP students must receive a minimum of two criterion grades a term. By term two, it would be expected that all 4 criterion have been graded and no N/As remain with some exceptional circumstances.

Students arriving less than 6 weeks before the reporting date will not receive a full report but rather a narrative report on teacher observations in their initial weeks of school.

PREDICTED GRADES IBDP AND IBCP

When looking to establish predicted grades, subject teachers will use both internal and external data to arrive at grades. For example, if a student's overall achievement in a subject area is consistently a 5 then this is the grade they are predicted for both university and IB purposes. The teacher is however allowed the ability to use their professional judgement and a best-fit approach to support a student's application. For example, if a student is between a 4 and a 5, the teacher is able to award either grade. In this way, the predicted grades are consistent, fair and supported with empirical data.

GWA typically sends predicted grades (PGs) four times a year – **for university applications and again for the IB at the end of the programme**. In April, the second set of predicted grades is required by the IB for every student, no matter when they plan to attend university. This set of PGs is inevitably more accurate now that all the required Internal Assessments (IAs) have been submitted, and there is a broader sampling of student work. As a result, they may be different from the first round of predicted grades sent to universities.

INTERVENTIONS

After each term of data collection teachers are expected to analyze needs, plan for, carry out, and report on interventions for each identified student. It is expected that each student who has been identified as requiring EAL, SEND, or G&T support have planned interventions to match the student's needs. Additionally, students not meeting target scores, or receiving 'below grade level' outcomes will also receive interventions. Interventions may also be planned for based on behaviour points, attendance issues, and other social and emotional needs which may surface. DOLs and grade level leaders will report to SLT on these planned interventions termly during data presentations.