



أكاديمية جيمس الأمريكية – أبوظبي

**GEMS American Academy**

ABU DHABI

GAA International Baccalaureate Diploma  
Programme Handbook



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## IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

As IB learners we strive to be:

### INQUIRERS

We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.

### KNOWLEDGEABLE

We develop and use conceptual understanding, exploring knowledge across a range of disciplines. We engage with issues and ideas that have local and global significance.

### THINKERS

We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

### COMMUNICATORS

We express ourselves confidently and creatively in more than one language and in many ways. We collaborate effectively, listening carefully to the perspectives of other individuals and groups.

### PRINCIPLED

We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.

### OPEN-MINDED

We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.

### CARING

We show empathy, compassion and respect. We have a commitment to service, and we act to make a positive difference in the lives of others and in the world around us.

### RISK-TAKERS

We approach uncertainty with forethought and determination; we work independently and cooperatively to explore new ideas and innovative strategies. We are resourceful and resilient in the face of challenges and change.

### BALANCED

We understand the importance of balancing different aspects of our lives—intellectual, physical, and emotional—to achieve well-being for ourselves and others. We recognize our interdependence with other people and with the world in which we live.

### REFLECTIVE

We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.

The IB learner profile represents 10 attributes valued by IB World Schools. We believe these attributes, and others like them, can help individuals and groups become responsible members of local, national and global communities.



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## Mission Statements

### GAA Mission Statement



GEMS American Academy is a diverse and caring international learning community offering a rigorous, relevant and holistic education.

We develop global citizens who have the confidence and conviction to pursue their dreams and impact the world.

### International Baccalaureate Mission Statement



The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

## The Diploma Programme

The IB Diploma Programme (DP) is an academically challenging and balanced programme of education with final examinations that prepares students, aged 16 to 19, for success at university and life beyond. It has been designed to address the intellectual, social, emotional and physical well-being of students. The programme has gained recognition and respect from the world's leading universities. The programme is designed for highly motivated students looking for a rigorous educational experience

The Diploma Programme started in 1968 with first examinations in 1970 and is now offered by more than 2900 IB World Schools in over 150 countries. There are currently 38 IB schools in the UAE, 35 of which offer the Diploma Programme. For more information or statistics on the IB in general and the DP in particular, please click [here](#).



In an effort to provide each GAA Student with appropriate challenge, GAA provides the following diploma options:

- Pursue a Full IBDP Diploma
- Pursue a GAA Diploma taking some IBDP Courses as well as GAA Courses
- Pursue a GAA Diploma taking GAA Courses

## The Full Diploma Programme Overview

*“The Diploma Programme is academically demanding and it may not be the best educational choice for all students in a school. However, success is possible for a much wider range of students than is often perceived”* (“The Diploma Programme: From Principles into Practice”, p. 20).

### We believe:

- Each student is a unique individual with equal potential to make a positive contribution to our school community.
- It is important to instill an enthusiasm for lifelong learning in each student along with the skills and dispositions necessary to prepare them for the challenges and developments which will be faced in their future.
- Our students must develop the skills and understandings that will enable them to become responsible, contributing and caring citizens of the global community.
- The holistic GAA learning experience is improved when parents are actively engaged in the learning of their children.

### Full Diploma Programme Regulations:

- Students are required to take three Higher Level (HL) courses and three Standard Level (SL) courses. For more information on the difference between the two levels, click [here](#).
- One course must be taken from each of groups 1-5. We strongly advise students to take their sixth course from Group 6 but a second course may be taken from groups 1- 4.
- Students must complete all aspects of the Diploma Programme core: the EE, CAS and the Theory of Knowledge course.
- Students must complete the above requirements and score at least 24 points to achieve the diploma, when DP results are released in July of the second year of the programme.

### Full Diploma Programme Application:

Gems American Academy is an inclusive institution and we believe each student can access the IBDP in their own way, when counseled appropriately. The following guidelines will be used to ensure proper student placement to promote a healthy balance of challenge and success.

The Secondary Principal and IBDP Coordinator have final say on all course placements.

- MAPs test results will be analyzed for growth and achievement and suitability.
- Teacher recommendations are at the center of the course placement process.
- Previous course grades will be used to help place students appropriately. **Students should have a 3.0 overall GPA.** Those that do not have this requirement must have MAP data to support the placement.

- In some cases, students will need to have a prerequisite to take a course. Example: Math HL requires students to have taken Pre-Calculus or equivalent and HL science requires completion of the correlating American Common Core course with a grade of B or above.
- Approaches to Learning (ATL) will be analyzed in Grades 6-10 with the expectation of students consistently earning Exceeding Expectations (EE) and Meeting Expectations (ME) on Report Cards.
- Students starting at GAA in Grade 11 will apply to an admissions committee composed of the Registrar, an academic counselor, the DP Coordinator and other professionals which will make recommendations to the Secondary Principal who will then make the decision based on careful examination of the student's profile and personal situation.

### **Requirements to Continue in the Full Diploma Programme:**

At the end of Year One Exams, all students will have their progress reviewed to ensure they are fit for continuing in the Full Diploma Programme. The following are required to continue to year 2 of the Full Diploma Programme\*\*:

- Student has shown a pattern of good behavior.
- Student HL course grades at a score of 12 or above.
- Student course grades total at a score of 24 or above.
- Student is on track to complete the EE.
- [Student is designated as being on-track in CAS progress.](#)
- *Diploma Course Student course grade at least 3.*

**\*\*All final program decisions will be made by the Secondary Administration and IBDP Coordinator.**

### **Course Change Policy:**

Course requests drive our master schedule process. We put careful consideration and time into informing our students of their course choices for the following year in order to ensure that students are making thoughtful course selections. We stress that their course selections need to be accurate and students are provided plenty of time to investigate any and all courses in order to make the most informed decisions. During the course selection process counselors are available to meet with students and parents to ensure proper placement. It should be noted that **all students** in any of the IBDP Courses are **required** to complete both years (2 year commitment) AND write the IB World Exam. Therefore, we have a strict course change policy at GAA.

Through a thorough guidance process, students make course request selections in their Grade 10 year. **Students may not change courses** This includes the following requests:

- No subject changes for either Full or Partial IBDP Students. Example: Moving from Biology to Chemistry.
- No moving between an HL and an SL course. Example: Moving from Business SL to HL.
- No dropping a class. Example: Deciding to drop DP Math SL for Math Foundations.

## Course Offerings

IB Diploma Programme students must choose one subject from each of groups 1 to 5; we strongly recommend students choose an arts subject from group 6, but they may also choose a second subject from groups 1 to 4. **All course offerings are dependent upon availability and schedule conflicts.**

All courses listed in the Programme of Studies and the Course Preference Form are subject to enrollment. If registration numbers are not high enough to offer the class students are required to choose another option. As well, not all courses will be available to all students, depending on the combination of courses selected. Courses are scheduled to accommodate the highest number of students so not all combinations will work for all students.

All courses are offered at the Standard Level (SL) and Higher Level (HL) unless specified. **Not all courses will be offered every year due to factors such as student interest.**

Group 1: Studies in Language and Literature	Group 2: Language Acquisition	Group 3: Individuals and Societies	Group 4: Sciences	Group 5: Mathematics	Group 6: The Arts
English Language and Literature	Arabic B (SL, SL & HL)	Business Management	Biology	Mathematics Analysis and Approaches HL	Music
Self-Taught Literature (SL only)	French B ( <i>ab initio</i> SL, SL & HL)	Economics	Chemistry	Mathematics Analysis and Approaches SL	Visual Arts
	Spanish B ( <i>ab initio</i> SL, SL & HL)	Psychology	Physics	Mathematics Applications and Interpretations HL	
	Self-Taught B	Global Politics	Computer Science	Mathematics Applications and Interpretations SL	

## Language in the Diploma Programme

### Language Philosophy

At GAA we prepare each student to be an internationally minded citizen who takes action to contribute positively to their community and the world. Intensive language learning is fundamental to this goal. Language learning promotes a dynamic framework with which to understand other cultures and perspectives. GAA students are expected to attain a confident level of linguistic competence and performance in more than one language.

The ability to communicate in more than one language facilitates an individual's movement beyond the first language and home culture, increases awareness of the world, and ultimately enables one to participate more fully as an international citizen. The learning process involves learning language(s), learning about language(s), and learning through language(s). Students learn about language and through language to foster knowledge, understanding, sensitivity, and appreciation of cultures, values, and traditions.

### Language in the DP

The IBDP is a challenging university preparatory course for the final two years of high school. A comprehensive and intellectually stimulating course of study, the IB Diploma is recognized by colleges and universities throughout the world, with aims of creating well-balanced global citizens.

#### Language A: Language and Literature

Each Full DP student must complete a Language and Literature course. Self-taught Language A courses are also available with DP Coordinator approval. All Language A courses provide a broad perspective through a world literature component.

#### Self-taught Language A: Literature ([GAA Language A Self-Taught Guide](#))

Students can apply to the School Supported Self-taught (SSST) Language Coordinator to take a self-taught language in their mother tongue. Students should have studied the language in an academic context. If approved, student will work with the SSST Language Coordinator to locate an approved IB Language tutor. Please make sure that you are scheduling regular meetings with the Self-taught Language Coordinator. The students, together with the parents, will be required to [sign this agreement](#) after their first meeting with the Self-taught Coordinator.

#### Language B: Language Acquisition

Students develop communication skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing through a wide range of literary and non-literary texts. Language B SL and HL are for students that have studied the language and have reached a level of pro. Language Ab initio SL courses are designed for students with little to no experience communicating the language. All final decisions on the appropriateness of the language course (Language A, Language B or Ab initio) for which students are entered are taken by coordinators in liaison with teachers, using their experience and professional judgment as guidance. The most important consideration is the language course selected should be a challenging educational experience for the student. Final language placement will be determined by the World Language department in consultation with the DP

Coordinator. A second Language A course may be taken by bilingual students to satisfy the Group 2 requirement.

Each Full DP student is required to take a language acquisition course in a language other than their mother tongue (first language). Students' determination of mother tongue is guided by the following:

- The student can communicate in the language but has low formal grammar or writing skills.
- The student has spoken the language from a young age.
- The language is spoken at home.
- The student has studied full time in the language.

### **Profile of our DP Language Acquisition Students:**

#### **- Arabic**

Ab Initio - is not offered as per Decree 883 it will be recognized for equivalency for graduating cohort 2023 onward.

Standard Level (SL) - Students opting for SL should be able to respond effectively to rehearsed and some unrehearsed spoken and written passages using accurate and varied vocabulary and grammar structures through the Standard Arabic language. Students should also be able to express a wide range of ideas and feelings with good pronunciation and intonation incorporating purpose of speech and audience.

Higher Level (HL) - Students opting for HL should be able to respond effectively to rehearsed and some unrehearsed spoken and written passages using accurate and varied vocabulary and grammar structures through the Standard Arabic language. Students should also be able to express a wide range of ideas and feelings with good pronunciation and intonation. In addition, students should be able to understand basic rhetorical devices and display a special passion for Standard Arabic literary texts.

#### **- Spanish/French**

Ab Initio - Students opting for Ab Initio should have little or no experience with the language. Students have limited speaking and writing skills in a limited range of everyday situations, understand simple and short texts and only know basic vocabulary and grammar. This course is also the continuation for upperclassmen needing to complete their World Language requirement.

Standard Level (SL) - Students opting for SL should be able to respond effectively to rehearsed and some unrehearsed spoken and written passages using accurate and varied vocabulary and grammar structures. Students should also be able to express a wide range of ideas and feelings with good pronunciation and intonation in a limited range of situations.

Higher Level (HL) - Students opting for HL should be able to respond effectively to rehearsed and some unrehearsed spoken and written passages using accurate and varied vocabulary and grammar structures. Students should also be able to communicate relevant and developed ideas on topics of personal interest and global significance with good pronunciation and intonation. In

addition, students should be able to understand basic rhetorical devices and display a special passion for literary texts.

### Progression of Language courses at GAA

Grade 6-10	IBDP Course Options
Phase 1 or Non-Native Foundation 1	Ab Initio
Phase 2 or Non-Native Foundation 2	Ab Initio Language B SL (at the teacher's discretion)
Phase 3 or Non-Native Foundation 3/4	Language B SL/ HL
Phase 4 or Non-Native 10	Language B SL/HL
Phase 5 or Non-Native/Native 10	Language B SL/HL Language A: Literature SL Language A: Language and Literature SL
Phase 6 Language A or Native 10	Language A: Literature SL/HL Language A: Language and Literature SL/HL

### English Language Learners (ELL)

As English is the core language of instruction at GAA, each student is expected to have a very strong foundation in English. Students' overall WIDA score should be at level 4. ELL support is available via push-in during some English classes. Due to the rigorous academic program and the fact that DP examinations are conducted in English, students must be proficient at or above grade level (reading, writing, and speaking) to be accepted as Full DP Students. ELL supported students will need to receive an additional recommendation from their ELL Support Teacher to enter the Full IB Programme.

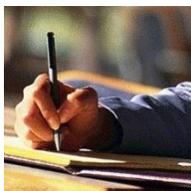
## The Diploma Programme: Core Requirements

The core of the curriculum model consists of the Extended Essay (EE), Theory of Knowledge (TOK) and Creativity, Action, Service (CAS). At GAA, students take a core class to cover the TOK curriculum and provide guidance with EE and CAS with TOK being the only aspect of the three components graded in the class. This class will help students understand program requirements and build skills to help with CAS and EE. The teacher of this class will also be the CAS advisor

and EE monitor but students will have a separate EE advisor.

The following descriptions come directly from the IB:

### **Extended Essay (EE)**



The EE offers the opportunity for IB students to investigate a topic of special interest, usually one of the student's six DP subjects, and acquaints them with the independent research and writing skills expected at university. It is intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity - resulting in approximately 40 hours of work. It provides students with an opportunity to engage in personal research on a topic of their choice, under the guidance of a supervisor. This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing of no more than 4,000 words, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject. Here are the guidelines for the EE process:

- Students will choose a subject from the list made available by the EE Coordinator. Due to advisor availability, students may not receive their first choice.
- Students are encouraged to undertake their EE study in one of their HL courses or if necessary an SL course but will need approval from the EE and DP Coordinators for any other subject.

### **Theory of Knowledge (TOK)**



The interdisciplinary TOK course is designed to develop a coherent approach to learning that transcends and unifies the academic areas and encourages appreciation of other cultural perspectives. The Theory of Knowledge course is in part intended to encourage students to reflect on the huge cultural shifts worldwide around the digital revolution and the information economy. The extent and impact of the changes vary greatly in different parts of the world, but everywhere their implications for knowledge are profound. Theory of Knowledge encourages critical thinking about knowledge itself and aims to help young people make sense of what they encounter. Its core content focuses on questions such as the following:

- What counts as knowledge?
- How does it grow?
- What are its limits?
- Who owns knowledge?
- What is the value of knowledge?
- What are the implications of having, or not having, knowledge?

Students are assessed in their submission of their TOK Exhibition (DP1) and TOK Essay (DP2)

### **Creativity, Action, Service (CAS)**



Creativity, action, service is at the heart of the Diploma programme, involving students in a range of activities that take place alongside their academic studies throughout the IB Diploma Programme. The component's three strands, often interwoven with particular activities, are characterized as follows:

- Creativity - exploring and extending ideas leading to an original or interpretive product or performance

- Action - physical exertion contributing to a healthy lifestyle
- Service - collaborative and reciprocal engagement with the community in response to an authentic need

Creativity, action, service (CAS) encourages students to be involved in activities as individuals and as part of a team that take place in local, national and international contexts. Creativity, activity, service enables students to enhance their personal and interpersonal development as well as their social and civic development, through experiential learning, lending an important counterbalance to the academic pressures of the rest of the IB Diploma Programme. It should be both challenging and enjoyable - a personal journey of self-discovery that recognizes each student's individual starting point.

Students must complete CAS across both years of the DP and enter their experiences and 1 project with required Learner Outcomes in Managebac. Students may get their supervisor to sign off on their experience.

## Group 4 Project

There is a compulsory aspect to all Group 4 Experimental Sciences (including Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Nature of Science and Computer Science) which involves all students in Grade 11 participating. At GAA we provide the opportunity for students to respond to a challenge at a full-day(s) event during the school day. Attendance at this event is mandatory.

## Assessment in the Diploma Programme

### Assessment Philosophy

GAA assessment beliefs and practices focus on mastery of the standards and proficiency of the learning objectives.

### Late Assessment Policy

When assessing students at GAA, teachers need to be able to provide students and parents with a grade reflecting their progress in a course. It is also important for students to meet established timelines for completing their assessments and failing to do so is a behavior issue. Late assessments are a disciplinary issue and zeros should not be included in student progress. In order to achieve these goals, the following procedures for summative assessments has been established:

- Teachers will post the due date on Managebac.
- Submission of the assessment by students is required on the due date. If an extenuating circumstance occurs and a deadline may not be met, students must have established an extension with the teacher in advance (barring emergency circumstances) in order for the work to be evaluated. Such extensions will be given at the teacher's discretion.
- If a student misses a summative assessment:
  - Parents and DP Coordinator will be notified via email.

- The Student will attend detention until assessment is completed and submitted to the teacher.
- Parent meeting to discuss behavior concerns.
- Repeated failure to meet deadlines will result in the student being asked to leave the program.

### **Teachers Assessment Commitments**

All teachers will:

- Provide meaningful feedback on assessments will be returned in a timely manner.
- Post any homework to be completed.
- Post summative assessments posted on ManageBac at least one week in advance of the due date. Post should begin with course name: example Chemistry SL/HL Unit 3 Test.
- Work toward the goal of students having no more than two summative assessments on a given day using the Managebac calendar.

### **IB Internal and External Assessments**

All IB Internal and External Assessments have been scheduled prior to the start of the school year in the Key Dates deadlines documents below. Assessments have been spaced out to ensure students are not overwhelmed by IAs (or EE and EAs) at a particular point in the year. Consequences for students not meeting deadlines are as follows:

- Detention(s) until the assessment is completed.
- Parent meeting to discuss behavior concerns.
- Serve an in-school suspension until the assessment is completed. Parents will be contacted. Students must make up all worked missed during the suspension.
- Repeated failure to meet deadlines will result in student being asked to leave the program.

### **Examinations**

There are four types of exams at GAA for DP students:

- Year 1 Final Exams held during the final weeks of Year 1.
- Year 2 Welcome Back Exams held during the 3rd week of the school year.
- Year 2 Mock Exams largely held during the two weeks prior to Spring Break.
- World Exams at the end of the two-year programme which take place during the month of May.

**Year 1 Final Exams** - *The purpose of the Grade 11 Final Exams is to help prepare students for IBDP World Exam format.*

- Exams are typically one to two hours in length.
- Exams are expected to simulate a World Exam as much as possible though being exactly the same as a Paper 1 or 2 may not be appropriate at this stage.
- These exams are cumulative of all of the Year 1 content as this is reflective of IB guidelines for school assessment policies.
- Teachers of the same course will have the same exam and review packages.
- Full DP students will be given study leave during Year 1 Final Exams.
- Students taking DP Courses will be given the day of the exam off if they have a Year 1 Final Exam.
- Exams are ONLY face to face as aligned by the IB Assessment Policy.

**Year 2 Mock Exams** - *The purpose of Year 2 Mock Exams is to help prepare students for IBDP format and conditions for their World Exams and will offer guidance on areas of improvement for candidates.*

- As much as possible, Year 2 Final Exams will be administered exactly as they will be in the World Exams. They will ONLY be administered face to face as aligned by the IB Assessment Policy. Currently, there are no provisions for World Exams to be hosted online.
- Full DP students and students taking 5 or more IB Courses will be given study leave during Mock Exams.
- Students taking DP Courses will be given the day of the exam off if they have a Mock Exam.
- Year 2 Mock Exams will be graded and returned to students in a timely manner so they may be used by students for World Exam revision purposes.

### **World Exams**

All students take written examinations at the end of the programme (May of Year 2), which are graded by external IB examiners. Students also complete assessment tasks during the school year, which are either initially marked by teachers and then moderated by external moderators or sent directly to external examiners. These assessments, together with the World Exam scores, will be used by the IB to arrive at a grade from 1-7 that is released to students and universities in July of the examination year.

- All students taking a DP Course are required to take the World Exam.
- Students taking DP Courses will be given the day before and the day of the exam off if they have a World Exam.
- During the final two weeks of classes prior to World Exams, there is to be no new content taught or assessments completed. Teachers will have a robust plan for helping students review in preparation for exams as a result it is essential that students are in class for these sessions.
- Classes for Year 2 students will end one week before the start of World Exams after which point they focus on exam preparation. Classes will no longer be in session and teachers will be available for consultation and assistance with exam preparation.

The marks awarded for each course range from 1 (lowest) to 7 (highest). Students can also be awarded up to three additional points for their combined results on Theory of Knowledge and the EE. The diploma is awarded to students who gain at least 24 points, subject to certain minimum levels of performance across the whole programme and to satisfactory participation in the creativity, action, service requirement. The highest total that a Diploma Programme student can be awarded is 45 points. See the [general regulations](#) for more details on these requirements.

### The TOK and EE Bonus Point Matrix

ToK/EE	A	B	C	D	E
A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition
B	3	2	2	1	
C	2	2	1	0	
D	2	1	0	0	
E	Failing condition				

#### Assessment Accommodations

The IB believes in fair assessment conditions for all students. At GAA we are prepared to help any students with their assessment accommodations granted they meet the [IB Inclusive assessment arrangements policy](#).

## Reporting in the Diploma Programme

GAA IBDP courses report using the IB grading scale of 1-7 for all classes except Theory of Knowledge which is graded on an A-E scale. All IBDP grade descriptors are available in the course syllabus for each course. Grades are then converted to an A-F grade for reporting to allow for a consistent transcript in the High School and enable GPA calculation. Here is the [conversion chart](#) from 1-7 to A-F, strictly used for Report Card purposes.

#### Report Grades

Starting at the end of 1st Semester in Year 1, a 1-7 grade will be available in the online gradebook. This grade will be updated each quarter for the remainder of the program. This grade will be used to help keep students, parents and teachers up to date with progress. Grades will be based on the extent to which the student has met the course grade descriptors on summative assessments. Formative assessments will also help to inform teachers of student progress, especially when it is difficult to decide between two grade levels. Teachers will use a best fit approach when students have shown capabilities of different levels.

#### University Anticipated Grades

The university anticipated grade is the teacher's prediction of the grade the candidate is expected to achieve in the subject, based on all the evidence of IB specific work and the teacher's knowledge of IB standards.

University anticipated grades will be updated on the following schedule:

- After Year 1 Final Exams
- October of Year 2
- January of Year 2
- After Year 2 Mock Exams

\*please note that these dates may be adjusted depending on the calendar year due to Covid precautions and changes in the school calendar.

Each prediction is made as accurately as possible, with a conscious effort made to not under-predict or over-predict the grade. For the most part, only the IB Internal/External Assessments, and assessments based on Papers 1, 2 and possibly 3, will be considered when predicting grades. However, teachers will also take into consideration more qualitative elements such as student ATLs. If teachers over predict, this can affect final university acceptance once grades are awarded in July. **It is essential that all stakeholders understand that teachers are not responsible for providing an anticipated grade that will help students garner a preliminary university acceptance. It is our goal to predict grades, as accurately as possible, based on the evidence available.**

Should parents have questions regarding anticipated grades they should first discuss the anticipated grades with their scholar who will already have had a conversation with the teacher. If parents wish to discuss anticipated grades further they should do so with their son or daughter's teacher, as they will be able to provide the kind of feedback and data necessary to answer questions. Should parents wish to pursue any issues related to anticipated grades beyond their conversation with teachers please schedule an appointment with the DP Coordinator. Once parents have met with the teacher all further discussions regarding anticipated will go through the office of the Diploma Programme Coordinator and Secondary Principal.

### **Approaches to Learning in the Diploma Programme**

Approaches to Learning in the Diploma Programme refer to deliberate strategies, skills and attitudes which permeate the teaching and learning environment. These approaches and tools are intrinsically linked with the IB Learner Profile attributes, enhance student learning and assist student preparation for the Diploma Programme assessment and beyond.

The five approaches to learning (developing thinking skills, social skills, communication skills, self-management skills and research skills) encompass the key values and principles that underpin IB pedagogy. Additionally, a suite of materials on Approaches to Learning in the Diploma Programme is available on the IB Website.

Each quarter report will assess students' progress with Approaches to Learning (ATLs) and will be reported using the [ATL Rubric](#).

## GAA IB Diploma Programme Awards

The Grade 12 awards ceremony will take place during the DP Celebration. The following will be used to nominate and then vote for students:

- Most Outstanding Full DP Student: Anticipated grades, development and outcome of IAs, CAS portfolio, ATLs and embodiment of the Learner Profile will all be considered.
- CAS Student of the Year: the top CAS student will have a portfolio that is above expectations with a balance of creativity, activity and service experiences as well as high quality reflections and evidence fully addressing the seven learning outcomes.

## World Exam Results

### Requesting Results

- Results will be available to students on July 6th at 12pm (GMT). To access the results, students will use the login information provided by the school.
- Students are to submit a list of institutions to receive their results by April 15th to the school. After results are issued, students will need to submit requests for results themselves, as the school will no longer have access to do so for them. The cost for this request is \$17.00 USD. Institutions that receive results electronically will be able to log in to view results on July 6th. Results for the US and Canada will be sent by July 31st.

### Remark

Remarking of exams can bring grades down as well as up so please use caution when requesting a remark. The following are the steps to follow if a remark is to be requested:

1. Write a letter addressed to the DP Coordinator and signed by (or on behalf of) the student requesting a “Category 1 re-mark” of the subject(s) in question please include the statement that you recognize that the outcome of the EUR can either increase or decrease your final score and email/post/deliver it to the school. Please use [j.thompson2\\_gaa@gaa-ad.com](mailto:j.thompson2_gaa@gaa-ad.com) for communication.
2. Make arrangements for payment of USD \$125 for each subject to the school as the IB will invoice us for this amount if the remark does not change the grade. The school will refund the cost if the remark results in a changed grade.
3. Wait patiently. The IB officially has an 18-day turnaround on remarked material.
4. You will be contacted by the DP Coordinator with the results, once the work has been remarked.

### Retake (November Session)

1. Retakes can only be administered at our campus. We cannot facilitate an exam in a different location. For a student to change locations, they would need to find a school to register them for the exam in that location.
2. Write a letter (email) addressed to the DP Coordinator and signed by (or on behalf of) the student requesting a retake of the subject(s) in question and email/post/deliver it to

the school.

3. Make arrangements for payment to the school:
  - a. Before July 27th - USD \$168 for each subject to the school as the IB will invoice for this amount.
  - b. After July 27th - USD \$481 for each subject to the school as the IB will invoice for this amount. (*deadlines are 11:59 pm GMT*)

### **IB Diplomas**

Diplomas are mailed to the school from the IB by the end of September. The school does not have the ability to print diplomas or expedite this process. If an institution such as ADEC requires results sooner, please be sure to select them to receive results, as mentioned above. You must notify the IB Coordinator should you need legalization services BEFORE June 15 cost of the service is invoiced and the expense of the student. This request should be coordinated with the IB Coordinator far in advance of the due date, original required documentation (per country guidelines) must be produced upon request.

## **Academy Honesty at GAA**

The full GAA Diploma Programme Academic Honesty Policy is available [here](#). Tips on academic honesty are available in the [IB Effective Citing and Referencing Document](#). The latest IB insight on Academic Integrity is offered [here](#)

### **Malpractice on Assessments to be Submitted to the IB**

According to the [Academic Integrity \(2019\) document](#), in cases of malpractice on assessments or exams intended for submission to the IB, the following protocols have been put in place.

Once a candidate has submitted his or her work to a teacher (or the coordinator) for external or internal assessment together with the cover sheet signed (or authenticated electronically) to the effect that it is the final version of the work, neither the work nor the cover sheet can be retracted by the candidate. If the candidate is subsequently suspected of plagiarism or collusion, it is no defense to claim that the incorrect version of the work was submitted for assessment.

After a candidate has signed and dated the cover sheet (or authenticated electronically) to the effect that his or her work is authentic and constitutes the final version of that work, the candidate's teacher (or supervisor in the case of an EE) must also sign and date the coversheet to the effect that to the best of his or her knowledge it is the authentic work of the candidate. Any suspicion of malpractice that arises after the candidate has signed the cover sheet must be reported to the coordinator help desk at IB Cardiff for investigation. However, if there is no tangible evidence of malpractice (such as the source of plagiarism) the candidate must be given the benefit of any doubt and the cover sheet must be signed by the teacher/supervisor. It is not acceptable for the teacher to:

- delete the declaration and then sign the cover sheet.
- submit the work for assessment without his or her signature.
- sign the declaration and then write comments on the work or cover sheet that raise doubts

about the work's authenticity.

- In the above circumstances the IB will not accept the work for assessment (or moderation) unless confirmation is received from the school that the candidate's work is authentic.

If a teacher is unwilling to sign a cover sheet owing to a suspicion of malpractice, the matter must be resolved within the school. The coordinator has the option of informing the coordinator help desk that the work will not be submitted on behalf of the candidate (resulting in no grade being awarded for the subject or diploma requirement).

### **Malpractice in Testing Situations:**

Students may not:

- take unauthorized material into an examination room (see below).
- leave and/or access unauthorized material in a bathroom/restroom that may be visited during a test.
- pass on information to another student about the content of an examination, this includes facilitating the exchange of information between other students in any way.
- steal examination papers.
- using an unauthorized calculator during an examination.

Students must not have unauthorized material (for example, own rough paper, notes, a mobile/cell phone or an electronic device other than a permitted calculator) in their possession during a testing situation. "In their possession" may be taken to mean on the person of the student, in the student's immediate proximity (such as on the floor or desk) or placed somewhere (such as a bathroom/restroom) for access during the test. The actual possession of unauthorized material constitutes malpractice; the school administration is not required to establish whether the student used or intended to use the material. No leniency is shown to a candidate who claims that they were unaware the material was in their possession.

### **Protocol For In-School Malpractice**

The following steps will be followed in cases of malpractice:

1. Teachers will advise students of suspicion of misconduct
2. A record of the incident will be forwarded to the Diploma Programme Coordinator
3. The Diploma Programme Coordinator will discuss the incident with the teacher
4. The Diploma Programme Coordinator will interview the student involved
5. The Diploma Programme Coordinator will forward his or her assessment of the incident to the Secondary School Assistant Principal
6. The Secondary School Assistant Principal will assess the infraction and impose the corresponding consequence, if necessary (*see full scope of consequences in Academic Integrity Document above*).

## Parent and Teacher Interaction Protocol

While all GAA staff members genuinely value working together with parents to ensure students succeed to the greatest extent possible, it is also important at this point in a child's development for them to learn to advocate for themselves. Oftentimes when students have an issue or concern they are coached in ways to resolve the issue themselves. Regularly, students are able to sort it out on their own and in the process have learned a valuable interpersonal skill that will become increasingly important as university life approaches.

Adult intervention on a child's behalf is rarely unreasonable and sometimes necessary, but most often issues of concern or conflict can provide an educational opportunity for our students and can be resolved by them. Parents are asked to encourage their child to advocate for themselves, it is a lifelong skill that we can begin to teach now.

Any substantive issues should be raised in face-to-face meetings. Email is not always an effective medium to raise a substantive issue or attempt resolution and could potentially cause further miscommunication due to a large percentage of our GAA community not speaking English as a first language.

Teachers will respond to parent communications promptly, even if it's a brief acknowledgement. For their part, parents should appreciate that teachers are busy during the day and may have other responsibilities after school. Students and parents should be aware that teachers may need 24-36 hours to respond to an email.

When issues do arise, parents and teachers should present specific desired outcomes that will help the child do better. When the child is placed at the center of the conversation any issues can be more effectively focused.

## Acknowledgements

Portions of this handbook are based on information from or used portions from the following sources:

- IB Diploma Handbook
- Academic Honesty in IB Educational Context
- IB CAS Subject Guide
- IB Extended Essay Subject Guide
- IB Theory of Knowledge Subject Guide
- Gems World Academy Dubai IB Diploma Handbook