



**EF ACADEMY**

International  
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**EF ACADEMY - TORBAY**

# **Curriculum Policy**



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## Curriculum Policy

### PHILOSOPHY AND AIMS:

EF Academy in Torbay is committed to providing a high quality intensive learning environment for international students who are determined to develop their future through education. We value qualities of enthusiasm for learning, creativity and aspiration to succeed both in study and in work. We promote active engagement with learning, responsibility for management of time and priorities, the achievement of individual goals and the development of the learner voice.

### Introduction

EF Academy Torbay students hail from over 40 countries. Not only does studying in our global classroom promote academic excellence, it develops superior social skills, and helps students begin building a network of friends and contacts that spans across the entire world.

We are proud that:

- Our vision, values, culture and ethos are shared by the whole School community
- That students are happy, secure, confident and valued for their individuality
- Students develop spiritual and moral values, self-discipline, responsibility, resilience and respect for themselves, others and the environment by being part of our community.
- Staff are energetic, passionate about their subject and committed to the value of an all-round education

EF Academy Torbay is everything you might expect from a boarding school with a first-rate learning environment, modern facilities, gifted teachers, and a personalised approach to each student's academic development. We are committed to providing a rigorous academic and intellectual education which will challenge and engage students, offer continuity and progression of learning to foster a life-long love of learning for its own sake and provide them with a secure foundation on which to continue into Higher Education and into the careers of their choice.

Our curriculum provision enables all students to have the opportunity to learn and make progress including those with educational special needs.

The curriculum provides for the teaching of PSHE which is taught to class groups as a timetabled discrete subject. Further details can be found in the PSHE schemes of work. The PSHE curriculum reflects the schools' aims and ethos.



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## Scheduling

All students have 15 minutes each morning in their tutor groups followed by 6 1 hour lessons each day. On Wednesday the final lesson (P6) is PSHE for all students followed by an assembly. Clubs and activities begin after school (P7).

## Our courses:

All students who are members of our school receive a full-time supervised education. This education is intended to give students experience in linguistic, mathematical, scientific, technological, human and social, physical and aesthetic and creative aspects.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, offering rich and varied opportunities for the development of academic interest and intellectual curiosity. The co-curriculum offers a wide range of enriching, enjoyable and challenging activities, which stimulate and develop the interests of each child, and promote a healthy lifestyle.

The **Preparation Course programme** is a foundation year or semester programme that runs for 4 terms in the calendar year. Students can be admitted onto the programme in September, January, March & June. Its primary goal is to build students' language and academic level to fulfil the necessary requirements for progression onto either Upper School or IGCSE courses.

The principle aim is to offer students from diverse educational backgrounds an opportunity that will enable them to develop the skills required to complete successfully externally accredited qualifications through the medium of English. To best prepare them for these qualifications we have designed a broad curriculum where all Preparation Course students will study:

- English Language development. This focusses around 3 main elements: general English, English for academic purposes and IELTS preparation. This component of the programme makes up approximately 50% of the curriculum provision on this course.
- Mathematics
- Science
- Business
- PE
- Art

These objectives, in combination with subject modules and courses provide students with the opportunity to:

- increase their ability to function in English both within and outside the classroom;
- foster a spirit of intellectual enquiry which encourages lifelong learning habits; and
- develop subject-specific skills that may inform future academic choices.



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The **International General Certificate of Secondary Education** (IGCSE) is the globally recognised qualification for students aged 14 to 16, especially those who wish to begin their education abroad early. This route provides excellent preparation for A Levels, IB Diploma and other pathways to university.

The programme consists of one or two years of study, in a range of academic subjects.

## **IGCSE 2 year programme:**

All students entering this programme (September or January in year 1) will start on the following subjects:

- English Language
- Mathematics
- Science (Double award)
- Business
- IT or History
- Drama or Art

All students will then either study IGCSE Spanish or have an additional hour per week of English, Maths and Science to support their progress in these subjects.

English Literature is also offered if we feel it is appropriate for any classes but this varies from year to year depending upon the intake.

## **IGCSE Accelerated programme:**

All students entering this 1 year IGCSE programme (September intake only) will start on the following subjects:

- English language
- Mathematics
- Science (Double award)
- History, Art or Drama

All IGCSE students (2 year and accelerated programmes) have an additional 2 hours per week of (non-examined) PE, which is conducted off-site and led by our Head of Sport. IGCSE students are also provided with the opportunity to sit examinations in their native languages where appropriate.

## **IB Diploma**

We are an approved IB World School and deliver a full Diploma Programme. This is a two year course of study for those who plan to attend a top university abroad and then pursue an international career.



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The curriculum is designed to provide a foundation for academic study anywhere in the world, regardless of the educational system currently followed. It aims to acclimatise students to the philosophy of international education, which demands independent thought, self-expression, and superior study skills. Students will focus on improving their general language abilities. They will also develop the specific language skills needed to cope with a full English academic programme, including writing essays and making presentations.

Students take six classroom courses from qualified IB teachers, ensuring breadth of knowledge in six subject groups: languages, social studies, the experimental sciences, mathematics and the arts.

Students have a wide variety of subjects to choose from within the six groups and will be provided with a comprehensive programme to cover Theory of Knowledge, Creativity, Action & Service and the Extended Essay. Students' progress will be monitored throughout the course and where necessary the student may switch from the Diploma route to the Certificate route. This change will be made in consultation with students and parents.



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Group 1 <b>Studies in Language/Literature</b> <i>First language / native language</i>	Group 2 <b>Language Acquisition</b> <i>Second language</i>	Group 3 <b>Individuals and Societies</b>	Group 4 <b>Science</b>	Group 5 <b>Mathematics</b>	Group 6 <b>Arts and Electives</b>	Core
SSST SL only  (school supported languages)	English B  HL/SL	Global Politics  HL/SL	Biology  HL/SL	Mathematics  HL	Film  HL/SL	Extended Essay
English Lang/Lit  HL/SL	German ab initio  SL only	Economics  HL/SL	Chemistry  HL/SL	Mathematics  SL	Visual Arts  HL/SL	TOK
German Lang/Lit HL/SL	Spanish ab initio SL only	ITGS  HL/SL	ESS  SL only	Mathematics  ST		CAS
Italian Lang/Lit  HL/SL		Psychology  HL/SL	Physics  HL/SL			
		Business Management  HL/SL				

## The Core Elements

The IB Diploma contains three core elements which help provide overview, additional academic specialisation and a recognition of interests outside the classroom. These are the Theory of Knowledge course, the Extended Essay and the CAS (Creativity, Action and Service) programme.

Students are also required to engage in independent research through an in-depth study of a specific subject. The research culminates in a 4,000 word essay, preparing students for university-level research and writing. They are encouraged to each reflect on the nature of knowledge by examining different ways of knowing (perception, emotion, language and reason) and different kinds of knowledge (scientific, artistic, mathematical and historical).

Finally, students are required to activate their studies by completing creative projects or service activities outside of the classroom. Students have organised events for local charities, been involved in the growing of produce for local peoples and tutored students in



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their school communities both in the learning of new languages as well as the sharing of their immense musical talents.

## GCE A level

All students choosing our A-Level programme are required to pick 3 subjects from 3 different blocks from the grid below. Each subject is taught for 7x1 hour lessons per week. In the 'empty' block students receive 6 hours of taught ESL sessions per week where the focus is on developing general English, English for academic purposes and IELTS preparation. The additional 1 hour per week is spent with the Director of University Guidance.

BLOCK A	BLOCK B	BLOCK C	BLOCK D
PHYSICS	PSYCHOLOGY	FURTHER MATHS*	FURTHER MATHS*
LAW	CHEMISTRY	MEDIA	MATHS
SCIENCE EXTENDED CERTIFICATE	ECONOMICS	MATHS	BUSINESS
BTEC BUSINESS DIPLOMA*	BTEC BUSINESS DIPLOMA*	BIOLOGY	ART
ENGLISH PROGRAMME	ENGLISH PROGRAMME	ENGLISH PROGRAMME	ENGLISH PROGRAMME

## BTEC

BTEC courses are high quality, hands-on qualifications grounded in the real world of work. BTECs are developed in consultation with employers and higher education experts, so they can trust that anyone with a BTEC will demonstrate the high standards of knowledge, practical skills and understanding required for further study and employment. Along with A Levels, BTEC Nationals are the most widely-recognised qualification to get into University. In 2015, 95% of UK universities and colleges accepted students with a BTEC qualifications, including universities from the Russell Group. When combined with academic learning BTEC Nationals develop practical knowledge and skills which help learners to prepare for – and progress in – their chosen career. In September 2018 we begin our first BTEC programmes with a Diploma offer in Business and an Extended certificate in Applied Science. As shown in the table above we have blended these into our AL options blocks to allow our students the opportunity to study these in combination with A-Levels.

In the 1st term of year 1 all upper school students also receive 1 hour per week of a taught sessions designed to equip them with the skills necessary to succeed in these demanding programmes. The planning of these sessions is overseen by the IB Coordinator and EPQ Coordinator. From term 2 onwards these sessions become Extended Essay sessions for the IBDP students. For those on the A-Level/BTEC route, they are then provided with the option



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of studying for the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) in this time. Those who are not studying for EPQ then have this 1 hour per week as supported self-study.

## **Additional Guidance & Support**

In addition to group lessons, all students receive individual “one-to-ones” with Pathway Managers and Teachers regularly. We also have 3 dedicated 1-1 Review days each academic year. These review sessions allow the student to review their work and to discuss areas which need further explanations. The sessions also require the student to plan their future learning and to set targets to ensure academic success.

## **Extra-curricular**

EFA’s curriculum is not just about the courses we teach. In line with our values, EFA regards the curriculum in the wider sense, consisting of all those activities planned by the school to promote the intellectual, moral, social, spiritual and physical development of the students, and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life at university and beyond.

Extra-curricular activities and those features which contribute to EFA’s ethos, such as the quality of relationships and commonly expressed values, are exemplified in the way in which we set about tasks and the ways in which they are organised and managed. All students are strongly encouraged to take part in the sports and activities programmes, which includes team and individual sports, trips and visits.

## **Enrichment Weeks**

EF Academy offers an exciting programme of Enrichment Days, which takes place over three weeks throughout the School year. The context for these days relates to our curriculum and extra-curricular provision. Our curriculum remains academic and challenging, the school community is rightly proud of the vibrant range of extra-curricular activities on offer. The Enrichment Days are a means to bridge these two vital areas of school life. Such days allow staff to devise activities which complement and evolve classroom-based work, and to harness the dynamism and flexibility of our extra-curricular provision.

The Enrichment Days will include school-based events, trips to museums and art galleries, visits to sites of historical significance overseas and presentations by guest speakers. All of these activities will be animated by a desire to offer students further opportunities to not only acquire new knowledge and understanding, but also, significantly, to develop skills and habits, which help broaden horizons and strengthen character.

## **Tutorial & PSHE programme**



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In line with our values and with the focus on success at university and beyond, all students take part in a Tutorial programme which develops themes of personal, social, and health education programme (PSHE). We regard this as an important part of our curriculum, as it prepares students for the wider demands of a university education, helping them to be healthy, to stay safe, to enjoy and to achieve, to make a contribution to society and to achieve economic wellbeing. All students have 45 minutes of PSHE per week, delivered on a Wednesday afternoon, followed by an assembly.

These themes are reinforced through other areas of the school's curriculum, eg assemblies and the 'hidden curriculum;' attitudes and expectations of behaviour promoted by adults in the school.

We also develop PSHE and citizenship through activities and whole-school events, eg the School Council meet regularly to discuss school matters and all students have the opportunity to participate in several trips each year.

## **University Guidance**

All upper school students benefit from a comprehensive university and careers guidance programme. Our mission for this programme is to foster ambition and aspiration for what comes after an EF education, to develop resilient and focused students ready for future independent learning and living and to secure the best possible university destination for each student.

To achieve this, we build the guidance programme into the timetabled curriculum for each year group.

Formal preparation for university applications begins in the first year of A Level or IB. Students learn how to research universities and how to explore the huge variety of subject choices available. The first year A Level and IB programme culminates in sustained work on the Personal Statement (UK applicants) or Admissions Essay (US and other international applicants). Individual support supplements the classroom sessions provided by the Director of University Guidance.

At the start of Year 2 of A-level or IB, we register the students for the applications they plan to make and guide them through the process step by step. Advice is provided to small groups and individually as required. EFA's dedicated Director of University Guidance personally reviews each application before submission and ensures that it is the best that it can be.

We are committed to supporting students and parents with each step on this exciting journey. We strongly advocate our students' strengths and qualities to each of their chosen universities. Our advice, information and guidance support EF students to take responsibility for their university applications and to have confidence in making important decisions about what comes after their time with EF.



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## **Careers Guidance & Support**

EFA students receive guidance on their IGCSE and post-16 subject choices from EF offices worldwide, prior to arrival at the school and, on arrival, from Pathway Managers and the Director of University Guidance. Where it is clear that a student's interests are evolving in and academic direction which may not fit well with the subjects available within EFA (such as an interest in a wider range of humanities than EFA currently supports) the school explores the best option for the student and advises accordingly. The Director of University Guidance works impartially, with a clear remit to achieve the best possible outcome for each individual.

Although almost every EF Academy student plans to continue with academic study when they leave, consideration is given to onward employment outcomes as part of the general university guidance programme outlined above.

EF Academy is proactive in challenging stereotypes relating to study and employment opportunities. Given the diverse cultural perspectives our students offer, we work hard to ensure that our students understand UK values in relation to supporting learners with additional needs or disabilities. For example, our students do not always recognise that disclosure of a specific learning need is valued as part of a UK university application. We also work hard to challenge gender stereotyping, such as our encouragement of female students to pursue careers in Engineering.

EF Academy supports students with advice on how to obtain work experience, whether paid or voluntary. The CAS programme facilitates this.

EF Academy has a development plan for University and Careers Guidance and this has been informed by the statutory guidance for the state sector.

## **Learning Difficulties and Disabilities, Special Educational Needs and Gifted and Talented**

EF Academy is committed to ensuring access to the curriculum for all. Students who have been assessed as having a learning difficulty and/or disability or those with specific Special Educational Needs have their needs considered by our SENCO, where needed an educational psychologist will carry out assessments as required. The provision for a student with a learning difficulty depends on a student's need having been formally diagnosed; and may include such help as group support within the classroom.

Within EF Academy we strive to screen new pupils for learning difficulties and disabilities during the first half term after their entry to the school, as well as acting upon any information passed on by the student's previous school. (SEN(D)) Policy

Gifted children are provided with opportunities to extend their knowledge in extension work in the classroom or small group activities. There are also a plethora of clubs and societies that stretch and challenge, together with our specialist classes in Law and Medical



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applications. The provision for a student with a learning difficulty depends on a student's need having been formally diagnosed; and may include such help as group support within the classroom. Teaching staff are well informed, have up to date knowledge of effective learning and teaching strategies and are skilled at teaching students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with particular special educational needs.

## **Academic Ethos**

In the school, considerable emphasis is placed upon examination success though it is important that as much attention is given to those who find academic work challenging as to the high-fliers. Colleagues are expected to monitor academic performance closely and take remedial action promptly in the case of those students who are struggling. All students are expected to give of their best and to be encouraged to develop their natural talents to the full. Modest results for students who may find academic work challenging are as worthy of recognition as are outstanding results for another who may be naturally gifted.

## **THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION**

We will use all opportunities to celebrate the international diversity of the student population. Studying at EF Academy will include a unique insight into the wide varieties of cultures and experiences of our organisation. Internationalism is the development of "citizens of the world" with young people who are responsible, active participants in their local and national communities, as well as in the broader international community.