



*Academy*

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

**EF INTERNATIONAL ACADEMY - TORBAY**

# **Curriculum Policy**

Persons involved in the development of the Policy

Head Teacher

Academic Course Coordinators

School Governing Body

Date of Commencement of the Policy: September 2015

Frequency of Review: 2 Years



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

## 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 75 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. Language skills, international travel, and internships abroad really make pupils' HE applications stand out with university admissions officers. The global curriculum at EF Academy offers the chance to experience all of these. We lay the foundation for leadership roles in multinational organisations, whether that's at home or abroad.

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, working concurrently with the PSHE policy and schemes of



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

work where further details can be found. The PSHE curriculum reflects the schools' aims and ethos.

## **Our courses:**

All students of compulsory school age 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 prepares students for the internationally recognised IB Diploma or the UK based GCE A level. 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 either the IB Diploma or 'A' levels through the medium of English. The emphasis is on experiential rather than instructional learning. This aim is realised through the division of the curriculum into core components both implicit and explicit:

Tuition and practice is provided in:

- Language Development
- Academic Reading
- Academic Writing
- Academic Listening
- Oral Skills
- Grammar
- Vocabulary
- Social English
- Pronunciation

Coupled with

- Global Citizenship
- Study Skills
- Values, Attitudes and Behaviour

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;



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

- foster a spirit of intellectual enquiry which encourages lifelong learning habits; and
- develop subject-specific skills that may inform future academic choices.

Students are taught 30 periods per week (60 minute periods)

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:

<b>LANGUAGE</b>	<b>HUMANITIES SOCIAL SCIENCE</b>	<b>SCIENCES</b>	<b>MATHEMATICS</b>	<b>ARTS</b>	<b>Non examined</b>
English Literature	Business	Science	Maths	Art	<b>PHYSICAL EDUCATION</b>
English as a Second Language	Geography	Additional Science			<b>PSHE</b>
School supported own language					<b>CAREERS Media Art IT</b>
					<b>ICT</b>

Academic requirements are: completion of an elementary school education and documented proficiency in English.

Students are taught 30 periods per week (60 minute periods)

## 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 abroad.

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



# Academy

## INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

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.

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

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	Business Management 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
Spanish Lang/Lit HL/SL		Psychology HL/SL	Physics HL/SL			



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

Students are taught 30 periods per week (60 minute periods)

## GCE A level

An open policy applies to students' choice of A Level subjects. Students have a free choice of any four or in some cases five A Levels, and the school aims to run any course in which numbers are economically viable. All students receive advice on their A Level choices. This includes an interview with the Course Coordinator or Deputy Head and, as required, Director of University Guidance. Advice is provided during initial subject selection and at the start of the second year of study, when key decisions regarding university applications need to be made. A course booklet is provided to help students and their parents to make informed choices.

All students initially study at least four A Level subjects. The curriculum of examination subjects is supplemented by a PHSE/Tutorial programme, including expert led lectures and seminars on topics such as drug abuse and sexual health. This programme is designed to prepare students for the opportunities, responsibilities and opportunities of adult life. In order to further develop the A Level curriculum offer, students are now able to opt into the Extended Essay and CAS provision within the IB programmes, this has already created a closer synergy between the 2 upper school cohorts and allows for the development of effective CAS projects such as raising monies for charities, by the collection of clothing and baking of cakes. Creating and developing the school magazine, working within the local community on a garden project and involvement with the Forestry Commission on Dartmoor.

EF Academy's A Level preparation programme ensures students achieve the best exam results in competitive subjects such as Science, Mathematics and Economics. Students normally choose four or three subjects in their first year and may, through consultation with Course Co-ordinators and the Director of University Guidance, drop one subject in year 2.

Languages	SOCIAL SCIENCE	SCIENCES	MATHEMATICS	ARTS	Additional Options
IELTS preparation	Business	Biology	Maths	Art	Extended Essay
EAL	Economics	Chemistry	Further Maths		CAS
School supported own language	Law	Physics			
	Media Studies				
	Sociology				

## English as an Additional Language



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

All students are assessed prior to entry into EF Academy and again upon arrival during their induction programme to assess their English language capabilities and needs. Extra support is provided through timetabled EAL (English as an Additional Language) lessons. These lessons aim to develop the students English language skills and communicative ability and to build the students confidence to succeed in an English speaking environment.

In their first year, students receive three periods a week of IELTS (IELTS, International English Language Testing System) in addition to their main English classes of two periods a week. They remain on this course until they secure a score high enough IELTS score to enter their preferred university.

## **Subject guidance**

In addition to group lessons, all students receive individual “one-to-ones” with Course Coordinators and Teachers regularly. 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 programme, which includes team and individual sports, trips and visits.

## **Enrichment Days**

EF Academy offers an exciting programme of Enrichment Days, which takes place over three days 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



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

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 programme**

Again, 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.

We teach PSHE and citizenship in a variety of ways. Some of the objectives are covered in dedicated PSHE times. Many of the objectives are covered through other areas of the school's curriculum, eg RE, assemblies, Science 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 representatives from each class meet regularly to discuss school matters and each year group participates in annual school trips.

## **University Guidance**

All 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.

IGCSE students undertake a programme of five Career Challenges, new for 2015/16. These are:



# Academy

## INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

1. All About Me
2. Picture Your Future
3. Action Planning
4. How University Can Change Your Life
5. The Insider's Guide to Student Life

As our students come from so many diverse backgrounds and, for the most part, do not plan to remain in the UK for future employment, our programme is geared towards preparation for further academic study rather than employment options at age 18. However, our Career Challenges encourage students to think about their future goals in the broadest possible sense and to develop the skills required to be reflective, self-aware and ambitious about further study and work. Setting goals and action planning to achieve them are key elements of this programme at IGCSE stage and these skills are further deployed in the first Year of A Level or IB when students work on a Personal Progression Plan (PPP).

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. They complete a PPP during this year (new for 2015/16) and we aim to develop this framework into a full reflective log incorporating notes on and photographs from speaker visits, open days and other university visits. 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.

## Careers

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 Course Coordinators and the Director of University Guidance. Where it is clear that a student's interests are evolving in an 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



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

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. IGCSE Career Challenge tasks and the Personal Progression Plan maintained by Upper School students explore work-related as well as further study-related goals.

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. EF is considering membership of ISCO as part of its wider development plan for university and careers guidance.

## **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 applications. The provision for a student with a learning difficulty depends on a



# Academy

INTERNATIONAL BOARDING SCHOOLS

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.