

HIGH SCHOOL AT DUBAI SCHOOLS AL BARSHA

American High School Diploma Program | Grades 9-12

A future-ready, inclusive American Diploma pathway that combines academic excellence, student choice, UAE identity and preparation for university, employment and life beyond school.

Our High School Program

Dubai Schools Al Barsha offers an American High School Diploma Program designed to provide students with a broad, standards-aligned education and clear pathways toward future study and careers. The curriculum is inclusive, adaptable, culturally relevant, active, social, and integrated. It combines strong academic foundations with experiential learning, interdisciplinary opportunities, and real-world connections to the UAE and wider community.

At a Glance

Diploma American High School Diploma	Credits 26 credits over Grades 9-12	School Day 7:35 AM-2:30 PM	Friday Early release at 11:30 AM
Assessment Formative + Summative	Service 100 hours across Grades 9-12	Advanced AP opportunities	Preparation University, career & life readiness

Curriculum & Learning

Students study a balanced program across English Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, Arabic, Islamic Education, UAE History/Pathway to Success, Physical Education and electives. Where appropriate, published SAVVAS resources provide a starting point for English and Mathematics, with adaptations made to meet UAE cultural expectations and the needs of our learners. Across subjects, students are expected to think critically, solve problems, communicate effectively, and apply learning in authentic contexts.

Graduation Requirements

The Dubai Schools American Diploma is a credit-bearing program based on the Carnegie Unit system. The standard graduation requirement is 26 credits completed across four years of High School.

Area	Requirement
English	4.0
Mathematics	4.0
Science	4.0
Social Studies (English)	3.0
Arabic	4.0
Islamic Studies	2.0
Health & Physical Education	2.0
Electives	3.0
Capstone / Seminar	Program requirement (Grade 10 onwards)
UAE History / Pathway to Success	Program requirement

Students also complete 100 hours of community service across Grades 9-12. Seminar/Pathway to Success and Capstone support research, reflection, future planning and application of learning.

Alternative Graduation Pathway

Individualized support when a standard 26-credit pathway is not appropriate

Students with documented special educational needs may be considered for an alternative graduation pathway, which may include an adjusted credit requirement of 22 credits or fewer and/or modified programming. This is not an automatic pathway. It is considered individually through parent meetings and a documented review of the student's strengths, learning profile, needs, and long-term goals. Any alternative pathway is subject to school leadership, Student Support, and relevant regulatory approval as required for the individual student.

Where appropriate, the personalized program may include:

- Adjusted or adapted coursework and alternative ways to demonstrate learning.
- Individual or small-group support linked to academic, social, and life-skill goals.
- Practical, vocational, or career-focused learning opportunities.
- Internships, work-based learning, or community partnerships where suitable.

- A transition plan aligned with higher education, employment and/or independent living goals.

Assessment, Grades & Academic Progress

Student progress is determined through a combination of formative and summative assessment, supported by published criteria and feedback. Students are encouraged to reflect on feedback and take increasing responsibility for their academic progress.

- Formative assessment: 40%
- Summative assessment: 60%
- High School report cards are issued at the end of each semester, with progress reporting during the year.

Attendance & Earning Credit

Regular attendance is essential. To earn credit, students must attend at least 85% of each course. Students who exceed the permitted number of unauthorized absences may receive No Credit (NC) for the course and may require an individual follow-up plan.

Credit Recovery

Where a student does not successfully earn a course of credit, an approved credit recovery route may be considered. This may include an approved online course with prior school approval or make-up coursework provided by Dubai Schools. Credit recovery is managed through the school's approved procedures and academic guidance process.

Student Pathways, Electives & Future Readiness

High School is designed to give students increasing choice while maintaining the core academic requirements of the American Diploma. Students can explore interests through electives and future pathway planning in areas such as STEM, Humanities, Arts, Business, and general college preparation. Grade 9 electives at Dubai Schools Al

Barsha may include Photography, Leadership, Entrepreneurship, Podcast/Communication and 3D Art, subject to annual scheduling and availability.

Through College & Career Counseling, students are guided in exploring different pathways and identifying the options that best align with their interests, abilities, and post-secondary aspirations. The pathway guide below outlines key subject choices and recommended courses to help students make informed decisions and build a strong foundation for college and future careers.

Pathway	Core subjects Grade 9	Core subjects Grade 10	Core subjects Grade 11	Core subjects Grade 12	Possible Elective subjects
Medical & Health science	Advanced Mathematics	Algebra 2 Chemistry	, AP pre- calculus, AP Biology, AP Chemistry	AP Calculus AP chemistry AP Biology	Sports Medicine, Public Speaking, Nutrition
Engineering & Applied science	Geometry, Chemistry	Algebra 2	AP Physics AP \ Pre- calculus AP Chemistry	AP Calculus AP Chemistry	Computer Science, STEM
Information technology & computer science	Geometry, English Language	Algebra 2	Algebra 2, English language	AP chemistry, AP Biology,	Computer science, Creative Design & Innovation, Programming
Business, Economy & Humanities	Mathematics Algebra I	Geometry, AP English	AP English	AP English, Math	Sociology, Entrepreneurship
ARTs, Architecture & Design	Algebra I, Social studies	Geometry, ART	Algebra 2, AP English, AP Art	AP English literature,	3D ART, Computer Science

Advanced Learning & University Preparation

Dubai Schools aims to build a culture of excellence in which students are prepared over time for appropriately challenging academic pathways. Advanced Placement opportunities accelerated learning and differentiated support are used to create multiple on ramps for students who demonstrate readiness. University and career

guidance is embedded across High School so students can make informed choices about courses, qualifications and future destinations.

Equivalency & External Assessment

For Ministry of Education equalization, students may be required to complete external assessments funded and registered for by parents. The High School team provides guidance regarding current requirements, timelines and approved pathways. Families should always follow the most current school and UAE regulatory guidance when planning for equalization and reach out your chosen university for external assessments needed. Students engage in a challenging and diverse curriculum that includes core subjects such as English, mathematics, science, and social studies, alongside opportunities to explore Advanced Placement (AP). Students are also supported in preparing for standardized assessments, including the SAT.

Academic Integrity

Academic honesty is central to Dubai Schools. Students are expected to submit authentic work, cite sources appropriately, collaborate only when authorized and use AI tools only when permitted by the teacher. Responses to academic dishonesty are educational, consistent and proportionate to the nature and frequency of the concern.

High School Handbook & Program of Studies

Students and families are encouraged to use the full High School Handbook and Program of Studies when planning courses and future pathways. These resources provide more detailed information about course descriptions, policies, assessment, attendance, graduation requirements and university preparation.

[VIEW THE HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM OF STUDIES / HANDBOOK](#)

Questions?

Students should speak with their Grade Level Leader, College & Career Counsellor, School Counsellor, Student Support Team or Secondary Leadership Team for guidance about their individual academic pathway.