



Australian International School Curriculum Guide

Globally focused, distinctly Australian





For AIS students, studying in Singapore is a life-changing experience. Our world class facilities, diverse student population and range of co-curricular and service opportunities develop independence, responsibility and encourage academic excellence.

Students can do almost anything at AIS, where curriculum choices combine challenging and enriching experiences with academic rigour and creative opportunities. From Preschool to Year 12, AIS students experience a variety of learning options which develop their talents and challenge their minds.

In Preschool, our youngest students discover the fun of learning through a Reggio Emilia inspired approach that combines with the International Baccalaureate® (IB) Primary Years Programme (PYP).

In Junior and Primary School, students continue the PYP and build on their understanding of the world around them, principally through structured inquiry. The elements of knowledge, conceptual understanding, skills, attitudes and action are integral to the six key areas of learning: Language, Mathematics, Science, Social Studies, The Arts and Personal, Social and Physical Education.

In our Secondary School we offer a range of challenging academic programs that focus on holistic education by connecting academic subjects with contextual relevance. In the secondary school years we also place great emphasis on the important issues relevant to adolescents in a global society.

In Year 6 to 8 students study the Australian National Curriculum which is mapped within a school- specific curriculum framework. Students in Years 9 and 10 study and complete the Cambridge IGCSE. This two year course is specifically designed to ensure that students have learned all the prerequisite knowledge, skills and understandings to be able to commence the IB Diploma or HSC programs fully prepared to achieve the best possible results.

Moving through into the final two years of study, the learning choices continue to grow. AIS is authorised to offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP) as well as the New South Wales Higher School Certificate (HSC), so our Year 11 and 12 students have two rigorous and international matriculation pathways from which to choose.

The learning possibilities at AIS are endless.



Dr Nick Miller
Principal



Elementary School

At AIS, we endeavour to provide a broad, balanced, contemporary curriculum and, therefore, deliver an enriching school experience that is significant, challenging, engaging and relevant to the needs of each child. Our Elementary School is authorised to offer the IB Primary Years Programme for students aged 3 years to 12 years. AIS also references the Australian National Curriculum and draws on the resources of internationally acclaimed learning programmes and philosophies to support the rigour of our curriculum.

Preschool

Our Preschool embraces the International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme (PYP), incorporating Reggio Emilia inspired projects within a play-based approach.

Reggio Emilia

Reggio Emilia projects are often determined from the children's interests. They devise their own questions, ways of finding out answers and use their different ways to represent their understanding. Children come up with their own hypotheses and then test them. They provoke, they collaborate and they research, using experts.

All this is encouraged, stimulated and facilitated by and with the teacher and can be worked on anywhere from one week to a whole year. They can be completed all at once or returned to, throughout the year.

Using this approach, children develop problem-solving, critical thinking, creative and lateral thinking skills and, as it is inquiry-based, the Reggio Emilia projects work side-by-side in partnership with the PYP framework.

The International Baccalaureate Primary Years Programme in Elementary School

Students in the 21st century are faced with the challenge of learning about an interconnected world where knowledge is constantly developing. The Primary Years Programme prepares students to be active participants in a lifelong journey of learning. The PYP focuses on the development of the whole child as an inquirer, both in the classroom and in the world outside. A balance is sought between the acquisition of essential knowledge and skills, the development of conceptual understanding, the demonstration of positive attitudes and the taking of responsible action.

The PYP Programme of Inquiry

Each year, our students learn through six Units of Inquiry (four in Preschool) based around six transdisciplinary themes. These themes are integral to our model of learning at AIS; we believe that learning is best done through contexts of global significance that transcend the confines of the traditional subject areas. Where authentically relevant, a range of disciplines, including Science and Social Studies, are integrated into the Units of Inquiry. In Junior School and Primary School, we balance this approach by providing explicit and differentiated learning experiences in the areas of Mathematics and Language. Students also attend Music, Visual Arts, Physical Education and Mandarin classes, which are taught by our Single Subject teaching team. Information and Digital Literacy (Technology) is considered a tool to enhance learning and is fully integrated into the students' learning experiences, facilitated by our Library and ICT staff. At AIS, Personal and Social education is fostered and taught across all subjects by all staff members.



Inquiry-based learning is the leading pedagogy of the PYP, although a variety of other teaching methodologies are also utilised. Teachers and students at AIS develop and use key questions that are concept-based to structure learning. Student-initiated inquiry is planned for and fostered, and this approach nurtures independence and results in building enduring understandings.

Through the PYP, AIS is dedicated to developing a community of learners who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect. We encourage international-mindedness in our students. To do this, we believe that students must first develop an understanding of their own cultural and national identity, as well as recognising their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet.

The IB learner profile describes a list of attributes that promote academic rigour and the establishment of a personal value system leading to international-mindedness. It is expected that PYP teachers will assess and report on individual student development in regards to each of these attributes.

More detailed information about the PYP can be accessed at <http://www.ibo.org/pyp>



The Secondary School

The Secondary School offers challenging academic programs that focus on holistic education by connecting academic subjects with contextual relevance.

Year 6 to 8 - The Australian National Curriculum within the AIS Framework

For students in Years 6 to 8, AIS benchmarks its curriculum against the Australian National Curriculum (ANC). The ANC is taught within a curriculum framework which is specific to us as a school. This AIS framework incorporates our beliefs and principals; it is the basis for our teaching and learning and is consistent with the methodology, philosophy and pedagogy of the Primary Years Programme (PYP), which precedes it, while linking with that of the IGCSE, which follows. Through the ANC and our own AIS framework, we are able to provide parents with precise details of the materials to be taught and clear information about how well their children are learning.

Linking our curriculum with Australian National Curriculum standards both eases the transition between Singapore and the home country of the majority of our students, and also enables parents to understand more clearly how their children are performing relative to the national cohort. However, recognising that our school is located in an international context, the ANC curriculum is modified by AIS to ensure that it is relevant to students of all the 50+ nationalities represented in our school.

The ANC is guided by the Melbourne Declaration, which echoes the sentiments of our own Vision statement, with both of our common goals being to equip our young people with the necessary knowledge and skills to succeed in an increasingly globalised and dynamic world. It includes a focus on seven general capabilities which encompass the knowledge, skills, behaviours and dispositions that together with the curriculum content in each learning area, will assist students to live and work successfully in the 21st century:

- Literacy
- Numeracy
- Information and communication technology competence
- Critical and creative thinking
- Ethical behaviour
- Personal and social capabilities
- Intercultural understanding.

Continua of learning have been developed for these general capabilities, to describe the relevant knowledge, understanding and skills at particular points of schooling.

Year 9 and 10 - The IGCSE*

For Year 9 and 10 students, the School offers a broad and balanced program delivered through the Cambridge IGCSE curriculum.

The Cambridge IGCSE is the world's most popular international qualification for 14 to 16 year olds. It attracts almost 500,000 entries from 144 different countries every year. The IGCSE is designed to be taught as a two-year course beginning in Year 9 and culminating in external examinations in Year 10. In some subjects there is a choice between



core and extended curricula, making the IGCSE suitable for a wide range of abilities. Students can enter examinations for the level that is most appropriate for them and this need not be the same across all subjects. The core curriculum is based on an overview of the subject and is suitable for students expected to achieve grades C to G. The extended curriculum is more challenging and designed for students who are expected to achieve grades A* to C. This is in line with the School's focus on differentiation and students can choose either stream according to their ability.

The IGCSE offers a flexible course of study that gives candidates the freedom to choose subjects that are right for them, while providing them with a broad knowledge base and lifelong skills. It develops learner knowledge, understanding and skills in:

- Subject content
- Applying knowledge and understanding to familiar and new situations
- Intellectual enquiry
- Flexibility and responsiveness to change
- Working and communicating in English
- Influencing outcomes
- Cultural awareness

At AIS, students will be required to study six core subjects (Science, English, Maths, Language B, Global Perspectives and one Humanities) and two additional electives (The Arts, Humanities, Technology, Physical Education).

*The IGCSE is being introduced at AIS in 2013, with the Year 9 cohort being the first to study this program. The Year 10 will commence the IGCSE in 2014.

Years 11 and 12 Options

The Year 11 and Year 12 curriculum flows naturally from the foundations built by the IGCSE in Years 9 and 10. Students can select either the IB Diploma Programme (DP) or the NSW Higher School Certificate (HSC) in their final two years of schooling.

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme

The International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP) is internationally recognised by leading universities around the world. Students choosing the DP are challenged to maintain the study of a broad range of subjects from six curriculum groupings. In the second year of the DP, three of these subjects are chosen for higher level study. They also complete three further core components; Creativity, Action, Service CAS; Theory and Knowledge (TOK) and Extended Essay (EE).

CAS encourages students to remain physically active, to pursue a creative interest and to engage in service activities within the School and beyond. TOK is an interdisciplinary critical thinking course which encourages enquiry and intellectual curiosity within and between all diploma subjects. At AIS, an integral part of the TOK experience will be a TOK camp to Sarawak at the end of Semester 1. EE is a tertiary level research paper of approximately 4000 words. Students are encouraged to use the EE as a tool to deepen their enquiry into a topic of special interest and work with a supervisor to help develop their line of investigation. Students can complete the EE in any one of their diploma subjects.

All DP students are required to successfully complete the core components of the diploma – CAS, TOK and EE. Students must also successfully complete the study of six subjects chosen from within the six grouping of the DP hexagon. Three of these subjects will be at Standard Level (SL) and three will be at Higher Level (HL). All subjects, unless otherwise stated, are offered by AIS at both SL and HL. Students will make final decisions about levels of study by the end of Semester 1 of Year 11.



The New South Wales Higher School Certificate

The New South Wales Higher School Certificate (HSC) is internationally recognised as a final year high school graduation credential. HSC results are used to calculate an Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank (ATAR) which is used for entry to Australian and overseas universities.

The HSC provides students with a flexible curriculum path where they may either specialise in a specific field or complete a wide range of subjects.

Year 11 (Preliminary HSC): To successfully complete Year 11 and progress to Year 12, students must satisfactorily complete at least 12 units including English (this will be six subjects for most students).

Year 12 HSC: To successfully complete Year 12 and be awarded the HSC, students must satisfactorily complete at least 10 units including English (this will be five subjects for most students). Year 12 students have the option of selecting additional extension courses in certain subjects.

A complete overview of the DP and HSC curriculum in the Secondary School can be found in the Year 11/12 HSC and IB DP Course Planning Guides. The courses offered vary from year to year depending on student choices and course options.

Glossary of Terms

Diploma Programme / DP	Two-year internationally recognised pre-university qualification from the IBO studied in Years 11-12
Higher School Certificate / HSC	Two-year internationally recognised pre-university qualification from Australia, studied in Years 11-12
IGCSE	International General Certificate of Secondary Education. Two-year international curriculum in Years 9-10, resulting in end of year examinations. Moderated by Cambridge University and recognised internationally.
ANC	Australian National Curriculum, followed in Years 6-8 and taught within the AIS framework.
Primary Years Programme / PYP	Curriculum framework followed in the Preschool, Junior and Primary Schools
Reggio Emilia	The Reggio Emilia Approach is an educational philosophy followed by the AIS Preschool, in conjunction with the PYP.
The IBO	The International Baccalaureate Organisation; an international educational organisation that offers education programs for students aged 3-19.



**Australian
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