

DESC

sixth form

CLASS OF 2026



Head Boy Harry and Head Girl Muskaan

HEADTEACHER'S MESSAGE



Thank you for considering Dubai English Speaking College (DESC) as an option for the next phase of your education.

This is a vitally important time as it acts as the transition between Secondary School and University.

We have one of the most extensive ranges of courses for you to choose from in the Middle East specifically designed to meet the needs of all students and provide you with the very best opportunity to progress on to University.



The development of the Sixth Form at DESC has been based on our ethos of providing exceptional teaching supported by discrete facilities for our senior students. Our Sixth Form students are treated differently, given extra responsibilities and privileges, whilst still being made to feel a part of the College and they act as role models to our younger students.

We place great emphasis on supporting the students through this phase and preparing them for University. Our information, advice and guidance - IAG services are exceptional and we have strong links with many Universities globally. We have a track record of students gaining places at the best Universities in the UK, USA, Canada, South Africa, Australia, the Far East and Europe.

Our Sixth Form facilities are truly exceptional, I am sure that when you see these for yourself, you will agree and want to be a part of our Sixth Form at DESC. These facilities include study areas, dining, social and leisure facilities, which all combine to provide an ambient place to relax and study independently. The Sixth Form facilities also include state of the art areas throughout the College including Science, Sport, Performing Arts, ICT and Design.

This is an exciting time to be a Sixth Form student at DESC and I know that our Sixth Form Team will ensure you have the best possible experience during this phase. You will be challenged to achieve the best you can in order to make the next step, whatever or wherever that might be. You will be supported and guided academically, emotionally and throughout the University application process to help you gain places at the best Universities around the world. You will also experience exceptional enrichment opportunities in areas such as Sport and Performing Arts.

I hope you find the information provided useful.

We look forward to receiving your application and discussing your future with us.

Chris Vizzard
Headteacher



SIXTH FORM AT DESC



As Head of Sixth Form, it is my privilege to lead DESC students through the two most important years of their education to date.

The College believes that a world class Sixth Form experience must focus on three key areas which form the pillars of our development plan and guide our decision making:

1. Academic excellence coupled with exceptional pastoral care
2. Outstanding provision rooted in extraordinary experiences
3. Seamless transitions espoused from world class information, advice and guidance.



The physical space apportioned to our Sixth Form students would rival any University Campus and ensures that our students are afforded every provision necessary to allow them to thrive and learn



ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE COUPLED WITH EXCEPTIONAL PASTORAL CARE

As a centre for academic excellence, DESC attracts students from all over the world and has been oversubscribed since 2021. Students graduate in Year 13 with the results and prowess to take University places, in prestigious establishments both in the UK and much further afield. This year, 44% of our students are now studying at Russell Group Universities, with students placed at eight out of ten of the top performing universities in the UK, and many more studying further afield in the US, Canada, Japan and the Netherlands. The personal care we take of each and every student gives them the confidence and emotional resilience to succeed and we take a keen interest, through our Alumni programme, of the future endeavours of our students.

OUTSTANDING PROVISION ROOTED IN EXTRAORDINARY EXPERIENCES

Dubai English Speaking College (DESC) is an exceptional place to study and work. The physical space apportioned to our Sixth Form students would rival any University campus and ensures that our students are afforded every provision necessary to allow them to thrive and learn. A rich and generous 'Super Curriculum' ensures that, outside of lessons, our students are exposed to a wealth of enrichment opportunities and provided with platforms on which to compete and perform. The Sixth Form Centre is a lively place of academia often thronging with society meetings, debate and general social activity.

SEAMLESS TRANSITIONS ESPOUSED FROM WORLD CLASS INFORMATION, ADVICE & GUIDANCE

Sixth Form is an interesting phase as in many ways it purely serves as a gateway to the next. At DESC, we believe that everything we do should open as many doors as possible and we therefore work hard with both students and parents in opening their eyes to the endless opportunities that await. With skilled professionals versed in post-16 information, advice and guidance we have the capacity to work with our DESC families in exploring future careers, potential University applications and ensuring that the transition from this phase to the next is as seamless as possible. For example, a comprehensive Oxbridge pathway is available for students, alongside others for those pursuing Ivy League or Medicine.



OUR CAMPUS

DESC Sixth Form students have the benefit of a purpose built Sixth Form Centre, which provides various independent learning spaces for private or collaborative study. At its heart is an extensive communal social area with all-day dining, wellness rooms, a high-performance gym and an Eco Garden. Designed with students in mind, the space mirrors the ethos of the College and is truly a spectacular part of the campus providing our students with a University-style experience. The DESC branded pool table remains a favourite of the students, but we are always looking to procure further interesting facilities and to use the spaces for extraordinary events and experiences.

OUR STUDENTS

As it should, study forms a generous portion of the daily diet of our Sixth Form students. However, studying in the Sixth Form is very different from the experience students have had previously and work is done with students to help them understand the Science of Learning and therefore improve their study habits. Unlike at GCSE or IB, students take a much smaller range of subjects, yet the depth is incomparable and allows students to truly immerse themselves in subjects for which they are passionate.

We are well-versed and equipped to support students who find the initial transition a challenge and use coaching and mentoring to ensure that the pace and demands of their Level 3 courses are eventually met and that those students can be independent and thrive. DESC students become lifelong learners and are prepared for further study at university or in the world of work.

SIXTH FORM



Life



DAILY EXPERIENCE

It is difficult to describe the DESC Sixth Form student as we pride ourselves on nurturing individuality and celebrating diversity. However, key values hold the student body together and are explored in regular keynote assemblies and modelled daily by staff. Therefore, the DESC Sixth Form student could certainly be described as tolerant, kind and well-mannered but also ambitious, confident and resilient. Success is celebrated but students are also taught to be magnanimous and humble. Leadership features heavily as a theme at Sixth Form and serves as a reminder that it is every Sixth Former's responsibility to be a role model and ambassador. Those who choose to pursue Leadership roles can aspire to become a member of the SSLT (Student Senior Leadership Team) which provides a unique and coveted insight into the workings of the College and exposure to the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) on a regular basis. Student voice is heard, and every student is provided with the tools and the platforms to support global concerns, local culture and worthy causes. We urge our students to create an aspirational legacy and for every cohort to outperform the one that went before them, thus creating a driven and inspired student body.

OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Overall, DESC Sixth Form provides everything necessary for a young person to flourish in their most formative years. It shapes the adult they will become and equips them with the skills, knowledge and emotional intelligence to make wise choices. Ultimately, it sends them on to the next phase of their life with an incredible lasting impression of education, which for the majority, leaves them eager for more. Through DESC's vast range of personalised pathways which can create a curriculum suitable for the widest range of students, DESC ensures that all succeed, all are supported, and all look back on their Sixth Form years with warmth and fondness.



SIXTH FORM TEAM



Mrs Lucy Petith - Deputy Headteacher

Mrs Petith has overall responsibility for leading the Sixth Form. She provides the strategy and leadership necessary for this Key Stage and ensures that it is aligned with the ethos, values and direction of the entire College whilst retaining some distinctions.



Mrs Keely Vernon-Ward - Head of Sixth Form

Mrs Vernon-Ward is responsible for academic excellence in the Sixth Form alongside its day to day running. She provides the managerial prowess and organisational skills necessary to lead nearly five hundred students and is committed to delivering outstanding provision.



Mr Kevin McLean - Deputy Head of Sixth Form

Mr McLean has shared responsibility for providing exceptional pastoral care in the Sixth Form with Ms Munro. He provides the experience and knowledge necessary to manage the behaviour and conduct of our young adults whilst also inducting new students and providing data analysis.



Ms Sophie Munro - Deputy Head of Sixth Form

Ms Munro has shared responsibility for exceptional pastoral care with Mr McLean. Ms Munro provides tutors and students with valuable tutor time activities, Moral Education Projects and wellbeing support throughout their journey. Ms Munro consistently works towards sustaining an ethos of mature independence amongst Sixth Form students.



Mr Mitchell Burke - Transition Manager

Mr Burke is responsible for providing information, advice and guidance for students and their families. He leads the DESC Oxbridge programme and ensures that transitions between phases are as seamless as possible.



Mrs Christine Dunne - Higher Education Co-ordinator

Mrs Dunne oversees the seamless transition of all students from DESC Sixth Form to Higher Education. Holding appointments, leading workshops, organising speakers and proofing statements, Mrs Dunne ensures that every student is provided with bespoke guidance and competitive applications.



Mr Pete Flynn - Academic Enrichment Manager

Mr Flynn is responsible for enhancing the curriculum through exceptional experiences. He coordinates the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ), leads on keynotes for both yeargroups and coordinates the DESC Super Curriculum.



Mr Matthew Davies - Head of Vocational Education

Mr Davies leads our Vocational provision. Overseeing and managing all of the different Vocational courses on offer, Mr Davies ensures that students excel and enjoy their chosen courses and experience a wide range of work-based experiences.



Ms Laura Reidy - Head of IAG (Information, Advice and Guidance)

Ms Reidy supports and coaches Sixth Form students who wish to explore a range of careers. Knowledgeable and resourceful, Ms Reidy ensures that those students who do not wish to pursue Higher Education are well equipped and prepared for the next stage of their journey.



Mrs Helen Cooper - Senior Student Manager

Mrs Cooper supports our Sixth Form students to ensure academic excellence and exceptional pastoral care. As a mentor and coach, she works with students in removing barriers to their learning and building good study habits. In addition to this, Mrs Cooper plans the Graduation, and Prom, as well as other rituals and traditions held in DESC Sixth Form.



Mrs Lisa Goodall - Parent Liaison

Mrs Goodall leads the administration of the Sixth Form, and the connection between parents, staff and students. Mrs Goodall keeps parents up to date with information shared via the iSAMS parent portal. Alongside managing local trips for students.



Mrs Sonia Rossetti - Sixth Form Receptionist

Mrs Rossetti supports the Sixth Form team in dealing with parental enquiries and absence. Friendly and helpful, Mrs Rossetti ensures that every Sixth Form parent and their child feels welcomed and cared for.



Mr Philip Arnold - KS5 Learning Support Coordinator

Mr Arnold works with individual students requiring extra support and guidance. He predominantly interacts with small groups or works 1:1 and is invaluable in building student confidence.

CURRICULUM

The Sixth Form curriculum at DESC is rich and varied, created to provide infinite pathways for our diverse group of students. Enhanced and enriched by a Super Curriculum, the overall Sixth Form experience is one designed to ensure academic excellence alongside extraordinary experiences.

PATHWAYS

The three pathways at DESC are Academic, Vocational or Mixed. Students pursuing our Academic route can select from 24 different GCE Advanced Level (A Level) Qualifications and should choose 3 separate subjects in total.

Students pursuing our Vocational route can select from 8 different BTEC/RSL Qualifications and should choose 3 options in total. In Vocational Pathways many subjects can be taken as a single option, known as a Sub-Diploma (worth 1) or a double option, known as a Diploma (worth 2).

Students wishing to pursue our Mixed pathway can choose a total of 3 options from either list.

The decision to pursue an academic or vocational post-16 pathway should be made by considering many factors. A Levels are assessed by terminal examinations, after two years of study, whilst BTECs rely on continuous assessment with no examinations. A Levels tend to be academic and philosophical in content whilst BTECs rely on practical and real-world application. Furthermore, success at A Level typically relies on achieving at least a grade 6 in that subject at GCSE whilst BTEC success relies heavily on hard work, organisation and application.

ACADEMIC PATHWAY

CODE AA

3 A Level Subjects = 3

VOCATIONAL PATHWAY A

CODE VA

1 BTEC DIPLOMA (worth 2) &
1 BTEC SUB DIPLOMA (worth 1) = 3

VOCATIONAL PATHWAY B

CODE VB

3 BTEC SUB DIPLOMAS
(worth 1 each) = 3

MIXED PATHWAY A

CODE MA

2 A LEVEL SUBJECTS &
1 BTEC SUB DIPLOMA (worth 1)

MIXED PATHWAY B

CODE MB

1 A LEVEL SUBJECT &
1 BTEC DIPLOMA (worth 2) = 3

MIXED PATHWAY C

CODE MC

1 A LEVEL SUBJECT &
2 SUB DIPLOMAS (worth 1 each) = 3



ACADEMIC

VOCAATIONAL



As a British Curriculum Sixth Form we offer GCE Advanced Levels (A Levels). Being a large, oversubscribed, established Sixth Form allows us to offer an extensive choice. A Levels are examined after two years and graded from A*-U. In the academic year 2022/2023, 48% of all DESC A Level grades were awarded at A or A* and 75% of grades were A*-B. Both statistics are significantly above UK averages and are testament to our experience in delivering world-class Post-16 education.

Please find our extensive list of A Level choices below:

Art Photography
Art - Fine Art
Arabic
Biology
Business Studies
Chemistry
Computer Science
Design and Technology: Product Design
Economics
English Language
English Literature
French

Further Mathematics
Geography
History
Information Technology
Law
Mathematics
Media Studies
Physics
Physical Education
Politics
Psychology
Spanish

As an inclusive College, we are proud to offer a growing range of BTEC National Diploma, (2 options), BTEC Subsidiary Diploma, (1 option) and RSL (Rock School London) Qualifications. Vocational Qualifications rely on ongoing assessment of coursework and are graded from Pass to Distinction Star or D*. In the academic year 2022/23, 87% of all DESC BTEC/RSL grades were either Distinction (D) or Distinction Star (D*) and 100% of students passed. Both statistics are significantly above UK averages and testament to our commitment to providing bespoke pathways for our students.

Please see our growing list of BTEC/RSL choices listed here:

BTEC - Applied Science	Subsidiary Diploma
BTEC - Creative Media	Subsidiary Diploma
BTEC - Creative Media	Diploma
BTEC - Enterprise & Entrepreneurship	Subsidiary Diploma
BTEC - Enterprise & Entrepreneurship	Diploma
BTEC - Hospitality	Subsidiary Diploma
BTEC - Sport	Subsidiary Diploma
BTEC - Sport	Diploma
BTEC - Travel & Tourism	Subsidiary Diploma
BTEC - Travel & Tourism	Diploma
BTEC - Information Technology	Diploma
RSL - Creative & Performing Arts (CAPA)	Subsidiary Diploma
RSL - Music Practitioner (MUSPRA)	Subsidiary Diploma



The majority of University offers are based on three subjects. Offers to even the most prestigious Universities in the world tend to be three A* grades rather than four A grades. However, the choice of three options is also conducive to a well-rounded Sixth Form experience, allowing time for enriching a student's timetable with extra activities and moments to access our Super Curriculum.

STUDENT A - 3 OPTIONS

PERIODS IN A DESC WEEK	28 HOURS	
Option One	6 Hours Of Taught Content	22
Option Two	6 Hours Of Taught Content	16
Option Three	6 Hours Of Taught Content	10
Enrichment	3 Hours Of Taught Content	7
Wellbeing	1 Hour Of Optional Content	6
Independent Study	2 Hours Per Option Subject*	0
		(Hours Remaining)

**The minimum recommended amount of weekly independent study, outside of taught content, per option is 6. Therefore, a student would still be expected to complete 12 hours of study at home/after school per week.*

STUDENT B - 4 OPTIONS

PERIODS IN A DESC WEEK	28 HOURS	
Option One	6 Hours Of Taught Content	22
Option Two	6 Hours Of Taught Content	16
Option Three	6 Hours Of Taught Content	10
Option Four	6 Hours Of Taught Content	4
Enrichment	3 Hours Of Taught Content	1
Wellbeing	1 Hour Per Optional Content	0
		(Hours Remaining)

**The minimum recommended amount of weekly independent study outside of taught content, per option, is 6. Therefore, a student, pursuing 4 options would be expected to complete an additional 24 hours of study at home/after school per week.*

Whilst Option A is balanced, Option B leaves no time for independent study which can prove problematic. Learning positive study habits is an essential part of a student's Sixth Form experience equipping them with essential skills for University and later life. Additionally, the commitment to completing an additional 24 hours of study on top of a rigorous curriculum can, in some cases, have a detrimental effect on the wellbeing of a student in the formative years of their life.

BESPOKE PATHWAYS

Proud to be an inclusive College, with a diverse student body, we have developed four specific pathways for students who are Emirati, are planning to study in Australia or South Africa, Arabic passport holders or Acutely Academic in a bid to make the transition from Key Stage Four to Sixth Form as seamless as possible.

EMIRATI

DESC welcomes Emirati families and ensures that they are provided with the necessary information, advice and guidance regarding Equivalency so that they can confidently pursue their chosen Sixth Form pathway. Equivalency refers to British Curriculum Public Examinations being recognised by the UAE and Ministry of Education therefore resulting in a Leavers Certificate which will allow the bearer to continue their study in the UAE or to avail of government employment in the UAE.

Decree 199 states that Emirati students must pass five GCSE subjects (for equivalency, a 'pass' is considered level 3 and above). They must also pass either two AS Level or one A Level subjects with a grade between A* - E.

BTEC Level 3 Diploma can now be equivalized to the MOE vocational Secondary Education Certificate providing that the student meets the following conditions:

1. Pass five GCSEs (above a Level 3) or obtain an MYP Certificate.
2. Score a PP grade in the BTEC Level 3 with a minimum of 120 credit points.

Looking beyond DESC, the EMSAT is no longer the only accepted university admission test in English and Maths. Emirati students will receive bespoke information and guidance for admission tests and available pathways during their journey at Sixth Form.

Please see the equivalency subjects to be studied by Emirati students here.

Please note that this information is accurate as of October 2023, but may be subject to change.

EQUIVALENCY SUBJECTS

English Literature

English Language

Maths

Further Maths

Chemistry

Physics

Biology

History

Geography

Psychology

Information Technology

Computer Science

Law

Economics

Business Studies

French



ARABIC A

To support students who will study Arabic A and/or Islamic throughout their two years of Sixth Form, we have developed a distinct strategy. These students must keep either Option A or Option C free from a choice to ensure that their timetable remains manageable and compliant. Most subjects span more than one option block therefore it also ensures that choice for Arabic A students remains as boundless as possible.

AUSTRALIA and SOUTH AFRICA

Specifically for our students hoping to return to Australia or South Africa, we offer a Cambridge AS English course. This optional, yet bespoke course, addresses the gap in the guided learning hours for English that universities in Australia and South Africa often require. Top universities in Australia and South Africa require English until the end of Year 12. To facilitate this necessity, DESC is proud to offer AS English Language which can be chosen as an additional subject.

ACUTELY ACADEMIC

Despite not being academically selective, DESC attracts students of extraordinary intellectual ability. For these students, a four A Level academic pathway may be conducive. With pastoral care at the heart of our decision making at DESC, a set of guidelines allows families to consider whether this pathway may suit their son/daughter and protects the interest of the student. To consider this pathway a student would typically obtain a minimum of eight grade 8s at GCSE.

Complementing our Academic and Vocational Pathways, we offer a range of academic enrichment subjects designed to enhance the overall curriculum for our students. Many students take advantage of one or more of our options and historically these additions have proved highly valuable in terms of University admissions.

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)

For students who are interested in extending their knowledge of a specific subject, we offer the EPQ. This qualification provides an opportunity for students to extend their abilities beyond an A level syllabus, and to prepare for University or their future career. Students have the choice of writing a 5000 word dissertation with academic referencing or to construct an artefact accompanied by a research paper. In either case, students learn advanced research skills as well as being given the opportunity to conduct their own primary research. Students are supported by a weekly lesson as well as regular meetings with a supervisor. With no set subject areas, students have the opportunity to pursue their own subject interests and determine their own title in conjunction with the EPQ Centre Coordinator.

MATHEMATICAL STUDIES

Mathematical Studies is a course designed to maintain and develop real-life maths skills. The content that the students work through is not purely theoretical or abstract; it can be applied on a day-to-day basis in work, study or life and includes a financial maths element. The skills developed in the study of mathematics are increasingly important in the workplace and in higher education; Mathematical Studies will help students develop and maintain these essential skills.

CLASSICAL STUDIES

Classical Studies enables students to learn about the cultures and beliefs of the ancient Greeks and Romans in a multi-disciplinary subject which covers both ideas and context. The study of the Classical world is invaluable in helping students understand contemporary events as Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome have shaped modern perspectives on topics ranging from Politics to Art. Classics is a subject designed to enhance critical thinking skills and build capacity for empathising with people from different cultures.

MODERN LANGUAGES

There is an opportunity to study an AS in French or Spanish as an additional enrichment subject. As an International College we are proud to offer this provision. The acquisition of a modern foreign language is not only a sign of genuine scholarship, but can also help future employment prospects.



SUPER CURRICULUM

THE DESC DIFFERENCE

The dictionary tells us that for something to be truly described as exceptional it must have elements of brilliance, atypicality and uniqueness. This page is dedicated to everything out of the ordinary. The attention to detail, the innovation and the creative spirit that drives DESC staff truly provides an exceptional experience for their students.

THE DESC DEMEANOUR

‘Like a DESC student please’ is a phrase used throughout the College to positively challenge behaviour. Knowing that these young people in our care will soon be attending interviews and interacting in an abundance of social settings we actively and consistently remind our students of the importance of manners and emotional intelligence. Saying ‘Good Morning Sir/Miss’ whilst maintaining eye contact is just one very small example of the daily routines embedded in DESC school life to instil what we refer to as the DESC Demeanour. Opening assemblies are dedicated to the ideal that DESC students will be recognised by others for their impeccable manners and maturity, and this is something that is actively reinforced on a daily basis.

SIXTH FORM STUDENT SUPPORT

An innovation of DESC Sixth Form is to provide the student body with a full time, non - teaching, Student Manager whose sole responsibility is to take care of the academic and pastoral welfare of the students. Unlike a traditional Sixth Form structure, DESC’s commitment to being student-centred affords its pupils ample opportunities to seek professional help for any areas in which they may be struggling. The Student Manager mentors students providing them with the skills and strategies needed for autonomous and independent study. For students that may need additional well-being support, our resident Student Advisors are an important aspect of our exceptional wellbeing provision at Sixth Form. Through 1:1 sessions, the Student Manager alongside the Student Advisors guarantee that even with a large cohort, every student has access to someone to help care for their wellbeing, mental health and long-term goals.

THE DRIVING TEST WALL

Another momentous occasion, distinct to students of Sixth Form age, is the opportunity to learn to drive and obtain a license. Believing this to be a key skill for all adults, DESC supports its students’ by securing lessons and celebrates each student that passes. Having your polaroid picture posted on the ‘Driving Test Wall’ has become synonymous with success and is yet another addition at DESC that drives our culture of community, care and family. Once again, students are presented with a keepsake of their achievement in the form of a DESC keyring which adorns many Sixth Form fobs and inspires yet more to complete this important life skill.

LEAVING AN INCREDIBLE LASTING IMPRESSION

After two momentous years with us we work hard to ensure that all students leave DESC Sixth Form knowing that they are always welcome back but also with memories and friendships that will last well into adulthood. A committee dedicates itself to planning events for the last few weeks of Year 13 and prepares events including, A Morning of Sport, The Gown Shop, The Yearbook, Shirt Signing Day, Graduation, SSLT Lunch and other memorable events to ensure that every DESC student leaves feeling part of something special. We are always sad to see our students leave but comforted that we have dedicated two years to creating young men and women with the DESC Demeanour.

THE LIFE CURRICULUM

During Year 12, one day per term is dedicated to ‘LIFE.’ These integral days, are dedicated to important issues, information advice and guidance, that do not feature in a traditional curriculum, but would feature on every adult’s list of things that are necessary to know. From university and alternative pathways, to every day procedures like tenancy agreements and financial management, the LIFE curriculum explores a range of topics and focuses on ensuring our students are ready to live an independent life. Alongside skills and tips the curriculum also carefully delves into sensitive areas, delivered in a transactional manner intended to inform rather than debate. Parents have control over exposure to these topics but typically agree that the College takes this part of their responsibility seriously and have been historically grateful for this initiative.

Life drop down days:

Term One: Higher Education and Alternative Pathways

Term Two: Health and Risk

Term Three: Skills for life

THE FRIDAY BIRTHDAY RITUAL

Turning 18 is a key moment and one that signals the start of adulthood. Most of us can pull on our time-stamped memory of this event in our own lives and recall where we were and who we shared this rite of passage with. With a dedication to creating a strong community, the Friday Birthday ritual ensures that every student celebrates their special day with their peers and is presented with a personalised key to treasure as a keepsake for years to come. The weekly event serves as a reminder of the importance of celebration, of supporting one another and brings the Sixth Form together in song and laughter at the end of another busy week.

WORLD-CLASS PLATFORMS

DESC students perform on the biggest stages and at the most prestigious events. DESC sports teams compete at the highest level both nationally and internationally whilst being coached by ex-professionals on pristine grass pitches and show netball courts. In Performing Arts, we have links with a number of prestigious Performing Arts institutions both in the UK and Internationally. Our LAMDA qualification carries up to 30 UCAS points, and we offer options in Acting, Musical Theatre and Speaking in Public. All Sixth Form students are encouraged to perform in our yearly whole school musical.

SAY ‘YES’ CULTURE

DESC Students try new things. For example, in Public Speaking, students can choose from Debate, World Scholars and Model United Nations competitions and residencies throughout the year to hone their skills and fill their trophy cabinets. The opportunities and experiences truly are extraordinary, creating students with unique Personal Statements worthy of any prestigious University.



WHY?

Competitive universities invariably tell us that they are seeking curious students who are passionate about their subject. Exam-orientated curricula do not always foster this: firstly, content heavy syllabuses can discourage wider reading and, secondly, the importance of coursework and project work has diminished in recent years.

DESC recognises that the key to academic enrichment is to encourage students to explore specialist fields. We refer to this as our “super-curricular” provision, providing students with the opportunity to extend their learning beyond the syllabus and, in so doing, experience the kind of independence that characterises undergraduate study. This is part of our culture of seeing education as a living entity that requires careful cultivation and nurturing.

WHO?

Each society has its own unique structure of leadership, but the common feature is that they are driven by students. Each week societies host presentations, workshops and discussion forums that allow students to hone their public speaking skills, extend their knowledge and exercise leadership. Often students bring insights from their Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) research and are able to discuss and refine their ideas with like-minded peers. Visitors to the College are invariably impressed by the vibrant atmosphere of the societies and the self-regulated learning that goes on within them.

HOW?

At present we have 23 societies. Many of these are subject specific such as Law and Chemistry, whilst others are more skills based like Debating and the Investor’s Club. Not only do these serve as forums to develop knowledge and expertise, they are also spaces in which students develop into young adults who will make a genuine contribution to the world.

WHEN?

EACH LUNCHTIME A SOCIETY IS TAKING PLACE IN SOME AREA OF THE SIXTH FORM CAMPUS. TAKE A LOOK AT THE WIDE RANGE.



SUPER SOCIETIES

Which societies will you join?

media society
debating
med podcast business and economics
physics & engineering
environmental desconomic review chess club
history *sixth form*
biology languages
oxbridge book club
philosophy & politics
model motor sports club technology
united nations tedx psychology
world scholars cup law
chemistry

STUDENT

DESC creates leaders. Surrounded by staff with post-graduate qualifications in Leadership, DESC students are well supported in understanding theoretical approaches and provided with multiple opportunities to apply their knowledge.

Sixth Form students are expected to lead in some capacity and are encouraged to take an active role in the DESC community. With a range of tiers and positions available, their leadership helps shape the future of the College. The idea of leaving a 'legacy' is a phrase used frequently to ignite the passion of the students and to empower them to understand their leadership potential.

STUDENT LEADERSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Students earn recognition for their leadership at Sixth Form. Opportunities for leading in three areas; service, mentoring and innovation are regularly advertised to students throughout the key phase. The emphasis is on commitment and independence. Once students have demonstrated an independent commitment to leadership, they may be awarded with either a Service Leader, Mentoring Leader, or Innovation Leader award. This award recognizes the diligent and autonomous commitment of students working within these leadership strands.

SENIOR STUDENT LEADERS

DESC'S Senior Student Leaders typically grow from the informal leadership opportunities or House Leaders of the previous academic year. Their role is to mentor others whilst also undertaking prestigious ambassadorial tasks and building lower school connections. They are only superseded by the DESC SSLT.



SSLT

The SSLT, or Student Senior Leadership Team, are a team of six leaders with incredible potential. They head up large initiatives, are mentored by the Head of Sixth Form and can be called upon by any member of the SLT (Senior Leadership Team) to fulfil tasks and roles. They are led by the Head Boy and Head Girl.

HEAD BOY & HEAD GIRL

To be appointed Head Boy or Head Girl at DESC is an incredible honour. The selection process is fair yet rigorous and testament to the extensive exposure to Leadership that those that make it to the final stages have already experienced. To ensure there is an element of mentoring and a 'handing over' of titles, the incoming Head Boy and Girl are chosen at the end of Term Two of Year 12 so that they can learn under the tutelage of the outgoing Head Boy and Girl in Term Three. A self-sustaining system compliments the ideology of the College of 'growing from within'.

Leadership is arguably the most beneficial activity a student can pursue outside of their studies. Planning, decision making, communicating and working as part of a team are all essential skills that are developed and enhanced during these experiences.

Join us and look out for your chance to become a DESC Student Leader in Term One.

LEADERSHIP



INTERNAL DESC STUDENTS

For our own Year 11 students we are committed to making the transition from Key Stage Four to Key Stage Five as seamless as possible and work hard to provide information, advice and guidance regarding Sixth Form from Year 9 onwards. Our transition programmes aptly termed Project 9.5, Project 10.5 and finally Project 11.5 are designed to build excitement about the prospect of Post-16 education and ensure that students and their families are equipped with the necessary knowledge to make positive decisions.

Project 9.5

Although Year 9 is rightly dominated by GCSE Option choices, there is an element of ensuring that these choices will have a progressive impact on any potential decisions made at the end of Key Stage 4. Key principles are explained to parents including the impact of studying separate sciences on future medical pathways and the decision on which Mathematics tier to be entered for which can impact A Level subject choice in Maths and Science. It is important that students and parents understand where their GCSE options could lead and feel empowered to improve grades and work ethic if current performance could have future consequences on potential pathways Post-16.

Project 10.5

In Year 10 the focus shifts to building excitement about DESC Sixth Form and students typically spend a week, whilst Year 12 are on work experience, experiencing the purpose-built Sixth Form facilities for the first time and gaining an insight into life as a DESC Year 12 student. During a week in May/June, all students are encouraged to begin to consider their choices, to understand the pre-requisite requirements for entry on to our multitude of different pathways and are provided with the opportunity to discover our library of Sixth Form videos and literature. Parents are invited to attend a meeting designed to answer any questions and to begin the process of thinking about the possibilities of life in DESC Sixth Form for their son/daughter whilst there is still time for them to improve their GCSE grades.

Project 11.5

By Year 11, DESC students are well-versed in the attributes needed of a DESC Sixth Form student and are provided with monthly opportunities allowing them to confirm their final choices and lock in their places on our multiple courses. An outline of Project 11.5 can be found below.

INTERNAL ADMISSIONS

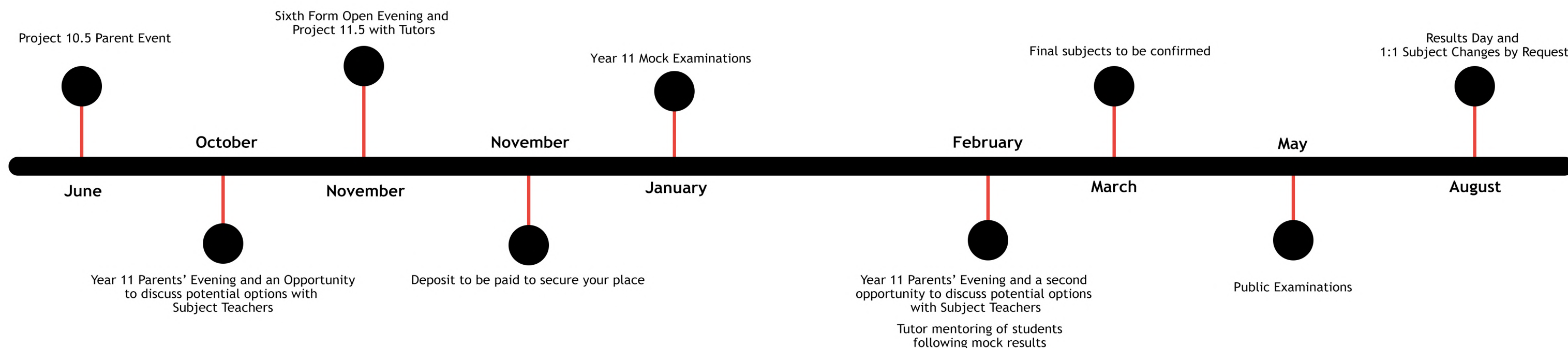
Outside of information, advice and guidance, the DESC Admissions Department will support you in making the transition from Key Stage 4 to Key Stage 5.

- All Year 11 internal students* will be offered a place in our Sixth Form.
- Offers will be made towards the end of October 2023 and we ask that a non-refundable deposit of AED 3,000 is paid by Thursday 30th November 2023. The AED 3,000 deposit will be deducted from your first term's fees.
- Once the offer is paid and accepted, internal students will be offered information, advice and guidance to confirm their subject choices***
- All subject choices should be confirmed by March 2023 following Mock Examinations in January 2023 and the final Year 11 Parents' Evening in February 2023
- Internal applications made following the deposit deadline of 30th November 2023 will still be considered, but remaining place may have been offered to external students.
- All offers for Sixth Form places are subject to GCSE results. Students must attain the minimum GCSE grades (see Sixth Form Subject Brochure) for them to enrol on the desired A level courses.
- If a student fails to attain the necessary GCSE grades and we are unable to offer them a place at DESC, they can request their deposit to be returned, this must be done in writing by 3pm UAE time on GCSE Results Day - Thursday 24th August 2023.
- Students must confirm that they are taking up their place in the Sixth Form by 3pm UAE time on GCSE Results Day - Thursday 22nd August 2024, otherwise the place will be re-allocated to another student.
- **All places are offered at the discretion of the Headteacher.**

*A record of poor behaviour or a serious incident in KS4 could result in an offer for Sixth Form being revoked.

**As per KHDA guidelines

*** The minimum entry criteria for subjects will be consistently applied. If the subject choices offered by the College are unacceptable to the student/parent a refund of the deposit will be considered.



I'M STAYING

POTENTIAL DESC STUDENTS

As an increasingly popular choice for external students and with a high retention rate of our own Year 11 students, we have a limited number of Year 12 places available for September 2024. We are always thrilled to receive applications from students eager to immerse themselves in the DESC Sixth Form experience and we welcome families to attend one of our weekly tours to really get an insight into what life is like In Year 12 and 13.

To apply please complete our online application form, a link to which can be found on our website. We will require a copy of your most recent school report, your mock GCSE results (where possible), a personal statement detailing why you would be a great fit for DESC and a letter of recommendation from your Head of Year or Headteacher.

We accept applications year-round, however, at the start of Term 2 we will review applications to date and begin to invite students in for interview. Please note that not all students will be invited and we will inform you either way by Friday 9th February 2024.

If you are invited for interview, we will ask you to pay a non-refundable Application Fee of 525 AED (inclusive of VAT). You should dress smartly (or choose to wear your current school uniform) and come ready to discuss your past achievements and future aspirations.

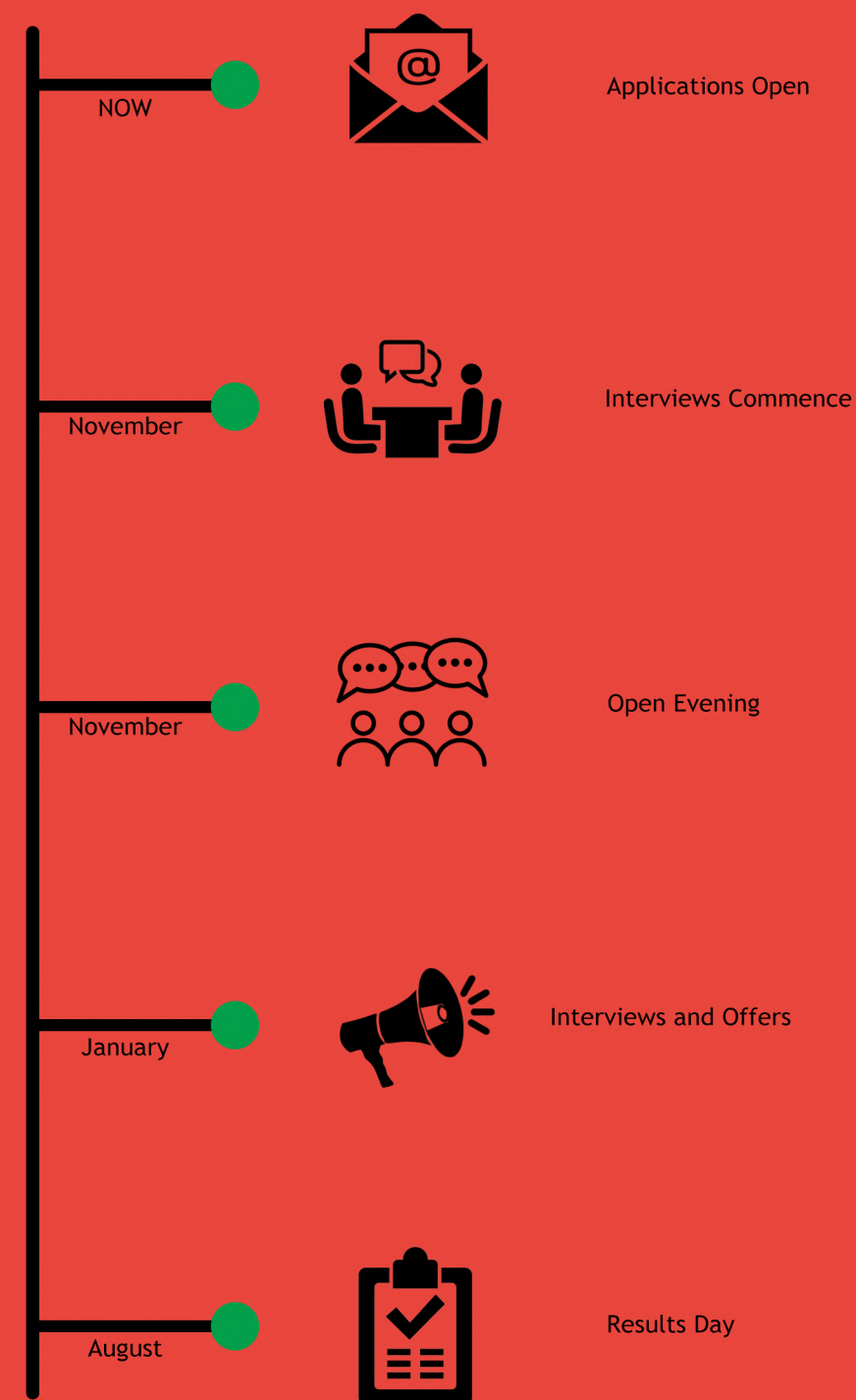
Following the interview, if you are offered a place a non-refundable deposit of AED 7,500 must be paid within 7 days of the offer being sent. The AED 7,500 deposit will then be deducted from your first term's fees.

All offers of Sixth Form places are unconditional as DESC will guarantee to find a suitable academic pathway for all students who are offered a place with us.

To access Level 3 courses, students must attain the minimum of 5 GCSE passes at Grade 4 or above. There are specific entry criteria to gain access onto A Level courses; please see our Entry Criteria for further details.

Please note: An original Transfer Certificate from the previous school is required to register a child with any school in the United Arab Emirates. Please ensure you request a Transfer Certificate from your current school if you are arriving from outside Dubai. Students transferring from schools within the UAE should give notice to the current school that they will be transferring and request a Transfer Certificate. Without a Transfer Certificate, a school is unable to register a student with the Ministry of Education and the student will not be able to attend school in the UAE. You should note that the certificate must not be dated more than three months prior to the date of entry to the new school.

ENQUIRY



Please note that all Sixth Form places need to be confirmed in writing or by email by 3pm UAE time on Thursday 30th November 2023, otherwise the place may be allocated to another student.



LIFE AFTER DESC

POST SIXTH FORM PATHWAYS



Sixth Form precedes a period of major change: the end of students' long association with the College and the assumption of formal adult status as they embark on another stage in their lives. Such a significant step requires thorough preparation; what students decide now will impact upon them for some time to follow. The range of options is considerable and there is much to think about; planning ahead, choosing a course of action from the alternatives available and matching ambitions to abilities is all part of the preparation process.

As part of their Sixth Form studies, students will take part in careers workshops and attend academic coaching sessions to provide them with guidance on the choices available to them. Experienced staff are available to meet with students and parents to discuss the routes available for them to follow when they leave College. Students are encouraged to undertake work experience opportunities to give them first-hand experiences of potential future careers.

The majority of our students apply to, and are accepted into, Universities all over the world. The application processes for the different countries will be explained to them and they will be guided through the various application processes, for example the UCAS system for entry to British Universities, or the Common Application Process for the US. Students will be encouraged to investigate the opportunities available to them and we give our full support in the pursuit of their University places.

In Year 12, students will start to think about their future careers. They will have the opportunity to attend career presentations from guest speakers, together with coaching sessions to help guide them with their future career intentions.

To assist with course and institution choices, University representatives visit the College on a regular basis and we recommend that students attend these meetings so that they can ask questions. All students at DESC have access to a dedicated software programme that enables them to search for relevant courses based on their interests and academic attainment.

As a result of this comprehensive preparation, DESC has an excellent track record of students securing places in high demand and competitive courses, at the most prestigious educational institutions across the world.

CHOOSING THE RIGHT SUBJECTS FOR FUTURE CAREERS

There are particular subjects which may be required or expected for entry to certain degree courses. These requirements may change as Universities adjust their expectations, and only individual University websites should be considered authoritative.

At present the following guidelines should be borne in mind:

Natural Science:	Mathematics plus at least two of the three sciences advised
Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary Science:	Mathematics, Chemistry and Biology strongly advised
Pharmacy:	Chemistry and Biology are strongly advised
Engineering:	Mathematics and Physics required, Further Mathematics is very useful
Computing:	Mathematics is required, Computer Science is useful
Psychology:	Usually two sciences are advised, but entry via arts subjects is possible
Economics:	Mathematics is strongly advised
Business Studies, Management:	Mathematical Studies is helpful but not essential
Foreign languages:	Two languages are desirable but not essential
Law:	History or English Literature are good facilitating subjects
Journalism:	English Language is strongly advised, however English Literature, Media or Psychology are useful
Sports Science:	Physical Education is required. Biology, Chemistry or Psychology are useful
International Relations:	Politics and History are mainly required. English Language is useful
Physiotherapy:	Biology is essential and a second science highly desirable (includes Mathematics)
Drama/Performing Arts:	English Literature and/or CAPA (history of performances and/or portfolio of relevant work)

Further details about all our courses can be found in our Subject Booklet publication.

AIM HIGH

DESC'S Higher Education Department offers information, advice and guidance to all students; we support our students and help them make informed decisions about their university choices to destinations all over the world.

As a result of our comprehensive preparation, DESC has an excellent track record of students securing places in high demand and competitive courses, at the most prestigious educational institutions worldwide.

DESC STUDENTS APPLY TO PRESTIGIOUS UNIVERSITIES ALL OVER THE WORLD

UK APPLICATIONS

DESC students are offered places at the top UK universities, including those in the Russell Group and Oxford and Cambridge Universities. The pathway to a UK application begins early in Year 12 when students are given the opportunity to research universities and courses using the Unifrog platform. Our experienced tutors assist Year 12 students in drafting the personal statement and beginning the UCAS application form. This process accelerates in Year 13 when university choices are confirmed and the application is submitted to UCAS.

Higher Education at DESC provision for UK applicants also includes:

- Dedicated Oxbridge Provision, including Oxbridge Interview Preparation
- Medicine, Dentistry and Veterinary interview programme
- University visits and taster lectures.

US AND CANADA APPLICATIONS

Universities in North America are increasingly popular destinations for DESC students. The Higher Education Department introduces students in Year 12 to the Common Application (USA applications), and OUAC (Canadian applications). We ensure that our students are fully equipped to submit a competitive application to prestigious universities in both USA and Canada.

Higher Education at DESC provision for North American applicants also includes:

- Bespoke workshops on all factors pertaining to a competitive application
- One to one meeting with University Counsellor
- Visits from relevant universities
-

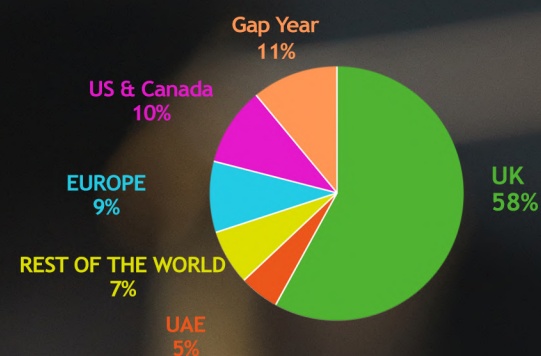
EUROPE AND REST OF THE WORLD

In an increasingly changing world, we have students applying to a number of different countries and our Higher Education provision continually keeps up to date with the requirements of applications to multiple locations. DESC students are offered places in Europe, in particular the Netherlands, as well as South Africa, Australia and other locations.

Higher Education at DESC provision for Europe & the Rest of the World, also includes:

- Bespoke workshops on application platforms, such as Studielink (Netherlands)
- Personalised information and guidance on each destination
- Visits from a number of universities

DESTINATIONS 2023



POST DESC

DESTINATIONS 2023

DESC is incredibly proud of its 239 students who graduated from Year 13 in 2023. The majority of our students have taken the academic route and gone on to pursue higher education, while others have taken alternative paths such as a gap year, and some have even entered the working world with full time employment. DESC students have secured places in many of the world's leading universities, over 46% of the cohort are at Russell Group universities in the UK. 14% of our UK applicants will be attending universities in the top 10 of the Best UK Universities 2023 league table. North America remains a top destination with 10% students attending prestigious universities in Canada and the US. We wish all of our DESC Alumni all the very best for the next chapter of their lives!



WHERE DO OUR STUDENTS GO?



ANY QUESTIONS?

Q. How many subjects do I need to study?

A. Typically, Universities base their offers on 3 A level subjects. You will choose 3 subjects and decide whether to undertake an academic enrichment programme such as an EPQ or Mathematical Studies. Please note that BTEC Diploma courses are equivalent to 2 A levels and BTEC Subsidiary courses are equivalent to 1 A level.

Q. How can I choose my subjects when I don't know what I want to do in the future?

A. Many students claim that they know what career they want to pursue, only to change their minds the following year. Although it is useful to have a clear idea, it is much better to pursue subjects that you enjoy and that you can do well in. Knowing your strengths and weaknesses and making decisions which are informed and realistic is part of being a Sixth Form student. In short, know your strengths and play to them.

Q. Can I study a subject that I have not studied at GCSE?

A. Some students have successfully studied A level courses that they have not studied previously, although the decision to do so is one which must be considered carefully in consultation with the appropriate members of staff. The final outcome, however, is decided at your guidance meeting or interview.

Q. Can I change courses during the academic year?

A. Making informed and carefully considered choices before you choose your A level or BTEC courses is crucial to ensure that you are studying the most appropriate subjects. Any change beyond this stage is not recommended, however, students will be allowed to swap subjects up to the end of September in the first term. This must be requested by using the appropriate form.

Q. How much harder are A levels compared with GCSEs?

A. The A of A level stands for 'Advanced', so all subjects at this level are significantly more challenging. Many students undergo a period of transition in the first couple of months of Year 12. All staff, however, are aware of this and can help you develop your expertise within that subject. The higher your GCSE results the more manageable you will find an Advanced level course.

Q. What can I do if I cannot choose my preferred subject combination?

A. Email: hcoordinator@dessc.sch.ae and make us aware of the subject difficulties, we will then look at possible alternatives to help you.

SIXTH FORM OPTIONS

OPTION BLOCKS

With so much choice available, DESC uses an option block system to ensure a tenable, bespoke timetable can be built for each individual student.

Please note the following key principles when making choices.

- There are 4 option blocks labelled from A-D
- 3 choices should be made from 3 of the 4 option blocks
- One option block should be kept free
- Arabic A students must keep either option block A or option block C free
- Most academic subjects can be found in more than one option block.
- For students with a grade 9 for GCSE Maths, Further Maths can be chosen in option block A and option block D together with a choice from either option block B or option block C
- Subjects with a ** next to them require a minimum of grade 7 at GCSE to ensure success at A Level.

ENTRY CRITERIA

DESC is an inclusive College but morally driven to obtain the best outcomes for all of its students. Our Post-16, three A Level, Academic pathway is incredibly challenging and should only be pursued by those who have demonstrated the skills and knowledge at GCSE necessary to affirm potential success at the end of Year 13.

To this end, the following principles are consistently applied by the Sixth Form team when providing information, advice and guidance to students/families unsure on what to choose.

- A grade 6 at GCSE or IGCSE is necessary to pursue a subject at A Level
- A minimum of grade 7 at GCSE is necessary to pursue Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry or Physics at A Level
- A minimum of grade 9 at GCSE is necessary to pursue Further Mathematics at A Level
- If Physics is chosen, Maths should be chosen to compliment this choice
- A student should avoid choosing more than two subjects at A Level that they have not studied at GCSE

OPTION BLOCK A	OPTION BLOCK B	OPTION BLOCK C	OPTION BLOCK D
A LEVEL SUBJECTS			
Art Photography	Art	Business Studies	Arabic
Biology**	Biology**	Chemistry**	Art
Business Studies	Business Studies	Computer Science	AS Mathematics
Chemistry**	Chemistry**	Economics	Biology**
Economics	Computer Science	English Literature	Business Studies
English Language	Economics	Geography	Further Mathematics*
English Literature	English Language	Mathematics**	Geography
Further Mathematics*	French	Media Studies	History
Geography	History	Physical Education	Mathematics
Mathematics**	Information Technology	Physics**	Media Studies
Politics	Law	Psychology	Physical Education
Psychology	Media Studies	Spanish	Politics
	Physics**	DT - Product Design	Psychology
	Psychology		
VOCATIONAL COURSES (BTEC & RSL)			
OPTION BLOCK A	OPTION BLOCK B	OPTION BLOCK C	OPTION BLOCK D
BTEC Enterprise & Entrepreneurship (EE) Diploma (2 A level equivalent)		BTEC Creative Media Production Diploma (2 A level equivalent)	
BTEC Sport Diploma (2 A level equivalent)		BTEC Sport Diploma (2 A level equivalent)	
BTEC EE Subsidiary Diploma	BTEC Sport Subsidiary Diploma	BTEC Sport Subsidiary Diploma	BTEC Creative Media Subsidiary Diploma
BTEC Applied Science Subsidiary Diploma	Music Practitioner (MUSPRA) Subsidiary Diploma	BTEC Hospitality Subsidiary Diploma	BTEC Applied Science Subsidiary Diploma
Creative & Performing Arts (CAPA) Subsidiary Diploma	BTEC Travel & Tourism Subsidiary Diploma		BTEC IT Subsidiary Diploma
OPTIONAL ENRICHMENT SUBJECTS			
EPQ	EPQ	EPQ	EPQ
Mathematical Studies ¹	Mathematical Studies ¹	Mathematical Studies ¹	Mathematical Studies ¹
	AS French	AS Spanish	AS Classical Studies

* Further Mathematics requires a 9 in Maths GCSE. This must be selected in Option Block A AND Option Block D

** These subjects require a 7 in Mathematics and a 7 in each separate science or a 7/7 in combined science to study. If iGCSE, students will require an 8 in Mathematics and an 8 in each separate science or 8/8 in combined science.

¹ May not be running in all blocks - will depend on numbers in the class

Depending on numbers, all subjects and blocks may be subject to change.

All Arabic A and Islamic A students MUST keep either Block A or Block C free.



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