

AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL MALAYSIA

Curriculum



The Australian International School Malaysia offers the 13 year school curriculum devised by the New South Wales (NSW) Board of Studies (BOS), with which the school is registered. This is the curriculum used for all schools in the state of NSW, Australia with the BOS having its headquarters in Sydney.

The curriculum is divided into a number of KEY LEARNING AREAS which ensure that a broad pattern of study is followed by all students.

1. The courses of study are compulsory until Year 8.
2. In Years 9 to 10 there is a core of compulsory subjects and a range of electives are introduced.
3. Full specialization is delayed until the final two years of study (Years 11 and 12). At this point a course in English is compulsory and students select a range of subjects to meet their ability and their aspirations for further study.

The 13 year NSW system is divided into Stages. They are:

- Early Stage 1 – Kindergarten (5- 6 years of age)
- Stage 1 Years 1 and 2 (6-7 years in Year 1 and 7-8 years in Year 2)
- Stage 2 Years 3 and 4 (8-9 years in Year 3 and 9-10 years in Year 4)
- Stage 3 Years 5 and 6 (10-11 year in Year 5 and 11-12 years in Year 6)
- Stage 4 Years 7 and 8 (12-13 years in Year 7 and 13-14 years in Year 8)
- Stage 5 Years 9 and 10 (14-15 years in Year 9 and 15-16 years in Year 10)
Year 10 students attain the School Certificate
- Stage 6 Years 11 and 12 (16-17 years in Year 11 and 17-18 years in Year 12)
Year 12 students attain for the Higher School Certificate.

The school follows the NSW school year – commencing in late January and finishing around mid December. The year is divided into 4 terms of approximately 10 weeks each.

The language of instruction in the school is English.

After School Activities (ASA)

Students participate in the ASA programme which takes place on Monday to Thursday afternoons from 3.20 pm to 4.20 pm. This programme aims to broaden the experience of students and assist in the development of skills and interests other than academic skills and interests. All students from Year 3 are expected to participate in at least one ASA each semester. ASA runs for 2 semesters (semester 1 is terms 1 and 2 and semester 2 is terms 3 and 4). Some ASAs are offered all year whereas others are offered on a semester basis.

The ASA programme is made up of school sports (such as Basketball, Soccer, Volleyball, Netball, Touch Football) and a variety of other activities. These vary from Martial Arts, Circus Skills, Art and Dance to Cooking, Cubs and Brownies, Swimming lessons, Model United Nations and the Year Book. The scope of activities changes depending on the availability of appropriate teachers or outside providers. Most activities are conducted by teachers but others are conducted by outside providers.

SENIOR SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Senior School involves Years 9 to 12, the last four years of the thirteen year BOS curriculum. In Senior School students sit for externally set and marked public examinations – the School Certificate (SC) at the end of Year 10 and the Higher School Certificate (HSC) at the end of Year 12. The School Certificate or its equivalent is the requirement to enter Year 11.

In the Senior School students have increasing choice regarding the subjects they wish to study but also have increasing responsibility to meet the standards set by the BOS. For example all students in Year 11 and 12 must complete a BOS programme entitled “All My Own Work” which deals with issues such as research and plagiarism. This is usually done by Year 10 students after the School Certificate in term 4 but also needs to be done by new students entering Years 11 and 12.

The Senior School has two sets of internal formal examinations each year and these prepare students for the external public examinations which take place in Years 10 and 12. The results of the school examinations are reported on the school reports. The reports also have a class mark indicating the student’s performance in a variety of tests, assignments, class activities and homework tasks.

An important element of the Senior School is outdoor education through the Camp Programme. Years 9, 10 and 11 have a five day camp usually in term 3. Year 12 do not have a camp but have a Study Retreat of two and half days in term 2. School camps are part of the curriculum and attendance at camp is mandatory.

Leadership is an important aspect of Senior School with the School Captains and Vice Captains having a clear role. School Captains also host whole school events and represent the school at some outside events. They are assisted by House Captains, particularly for sporting events and other Senior School competitions. Support is provided for the Captains to assist them to manage and develop their roles. Students from each Senior School class elect representative to attend the Students’ Representative Council meetings.

All classes in Senior School have a Home Room teacher who has both an administrative and a welfare function with the students in the class.

Years 9 and 10

Students in Years 9 and 10 have core subjects that all students must study:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship
- Australian History, Civics and Citizenship
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

In addition students choose 3 electives subjects. These are arranged on three lines and one subject is chosen from each line. Some subjects appear on more than one line but it may not be possible for all combinations of subjects to be studied.

Subjects currently available are:

Malaysian Studies	Information and Software Technology
Commerce	Photographic and Digital Media
Visual Arts	Physical Activity and Sports Studies
Drama	Design and Technology
Music	

In core subjects classes are based on the year group – Year 9 has two classes and Year 10 has two classes for each core subject. In elective classes there is a combination of Year 10 and Year 9 students following a two year cyclical programme.

Further information regarding all subjects is in the current Year 9 Subject Selection Handbook available on this website.

Additional elective subjects may be offered depending on student numbers, demand and teacher availability. Malaysian citizens enrolled since June 2006 must choose Malaysian Studies as one elective.

Students in Year 10 sit for the School Certificate which marks the end of mandatory schooling. These examinations are in English – literacy, Mathematics, Science, Australian Geography, Civics and Citizenship and Australian History, Civics and Citizenship. Students also sit for a compulsory Computer Skills examination based on skills expected to be taught in all syllabuses.

Students are internally assessed for the School Certificate in both compulsory and elective subjects. Assessment tasks are set and marked within the school in line with the requirements of the BOS. The current School Certificate Assessment Handbook is available on this website and should be consulted by potential Year 10 students.

Years 11 and 12

In Years 11 and 12 all students must study English. In Year 11 they must study five 2 unit subjects or four 2 unit subjects and two 1 unit subjects in addition to English – a total of 12 units. Students cannot choose new subjects in Year 12 but must continue what they chose in Year 11. Students may have the option of dropping one subject in Year 12, however they must have 10 units to be eligible for the HSC.

English is currently available at three levels – English Advanced, English Standard and English ESL. Students choosing ESL must ensure they meet BOS guidelines regarding eligibility.

Other subjects currently offered are (these are two unit subjects unless otherwise indicated):

Mathematics	Business Studies	Design and Technology
General Mathematics	Economics	Visual Arts
Biology	Modern History	Malay Background Speakers
Chemistry	Legal Studies	Drama
Physics		
Information Processes and Technology		
Photography, Video and Digital Imaging (1 unit)		
Mathematics Extension 1 (1 Unit)		
Mathematics Extension 2 (1 Unit) (Year 12 only)		

These subjects are spread over 7 elective lines but it will not be possible for students to take all combinations of subjects.

Students who have excellent School Certificate results in Mathematics and Science may study Chemistry and/or Physics and Mathematics. Students who have excellent Mathematical ability may also choose to study Mathematics Extension 1 in Year 11 and 12. Outstanding students may study Mathematics Extension 2 in Year 12. Further information about these courses is available in the current Year 11 Subject Selection Handbook available on this website.

Additional subjects may be offered depending on student numbers, demand and teacher availability.

All subjects offered by AISM are recognised by the BOS for the HSC. They are also all Category A courses for University admission – the school does not offer Category B courses. Photography, Video and Digital Imaging is not accepted by Australian universities for university entry. Students requiring an ATAR should ensure they have 10 units of Category A courses if they also wish to choose Photography, Video and Digital Imaging.

Some Year 11 and 12 subjects will have a class between 3.15 and 4.20 pm during the ASA programme. Academic subjects timetabled have precedence over ASA.

Students who have completed the School Certificate or its equivalent may enter Year 11. Students who wish to enter Year 12 must have completed the equivalent of Year 11, however once Year 12 has commenced the school will normally only take new Year 12 students who are direct transfers from NSW and who have subjects compatible with the AISM timetable.

Potential entrants into Year 11 or 12 should read the section titled University Entry and the HSC on this website.

Further information is available from the NSW Board of Studies on their website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au.

MIDDLE SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Middle School comprises Years 5 to 8. In NSW Years 5 and 6 are the final years of Primary School whilst Years 7 and 8 are the first two years of Secondary School. By placing these years into the Middle School AISM is able to allow students in Years 5 and 6 to be treated as the maturing people they are rather than being tied to the expectations of much younger children. At the same time the students who are in Years 7 and 8 are able to develop without being seen as relatively immature, as they often will be seen in a traditional secondary school. Students study core subjects as require by the BOS and are introduced to research through the Independent Research Project. This pattern of studying core subjects and doing independent research provides them with a solid foundation and framework for the rigour of the Senior School.

An important element of the Middle School is outdoor education through the Camp Programme. Years 5 and 6 have a three day camp usually in term 2 and Years 7 and 8 have a five day camp at the same time. School camps are part of the curriculum and attendance at camp is mandatory.

Leadership is an important element of Middle School with Middle School Captains and Vice Captains having a clear role. Middle School Captains run Middle School assemblies and often play a role at whole school events and represent the school at some outside events. They are assisted by House Captains, particularly for sporting vents and other Middle School competitions. Support is provided for the Captains to assist them to develop their roles. Students from each Middle School class elect representative to attend the Students' Representative Council meetings.

Year 5

In Year 5 students follow the same Key Learning Areas as used in the Junior School. The key learning areas are:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Human Society and Its Environment (Social Sciences)
- Creative and Practical Arts – including Visual Arts, Music and Drama
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
- Languages Other Than English – students study Bahasa Malaysia and Mandarin. Both are studied at levels appropriate to their age, stage and language background.

Students have a class teacher for most KLAs and specialist teachers for Music, Drama, Languages and Library. Physical Education is conducted by the class teacher with direct assistance from a specialist Physical Education teacher.

Years 6 and 7

In Year 6 and 7 students follow the same KLA pattern but are introduced to a greater degree of subject specialization. They have a teacher for each of:

- English and Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) - History and Geography
- Mathematics and Science

- Visual Art, Computing and Design and Technology
- Music
- Drama
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
- Languages Other Than English – Bahasa Malaysia and Mandarin

In Years 6 and 7 there is increasing use of subject specialist teachers. Subjects are grouped together to reduce the number of teachers for each class. Each class has a Home Room teacher who is usually one of the subject teachers.

Year 8

All students study:

- English
- Mathematics
- Science
- Human Society and Its Environment (HSIE) – Geography and History
- Languages Other Than English – Bahasa Malaysia and Mandarin
- Technology and Applied Studies – Design and Technology
- Creative Arts – Visual Arts, Music, Drama
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education

In Year 8 there is subject specialist teachers although in many cases two subjects may be taken by one teacher as is the case in Years 6 and 7. Each class has a Home Room teacher who is usually one of the subject teachers.

The Independent Research Project (IRP)

In the Middle School there is an emphasis on researching and analyzing information and using critical and creative thinking skills as the basis of the research. Students do this by undertaking an Independent Research Project which takes place over three terms. In each term there is a different curriculum focus. In Term 4, the students present their year's work to the parent community and to their peers.

The topic matter for the IRP relates to the topic matter in the individual subjects and the teachers work together to assist students to achieve the integration required of the research project. Each class, from Year 6 to Year 8, has specific IRP lessons in the timetable in order to receive guidance. This is usually taken by the Home Room teacher. The IRP is coordinated by the Middle School Curriculum Coordinator.

Further information is available from the NSW Board of Studies on their website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au .

JUNIOR SCHOOL CURRICULUM

The Junior School starts with Pre-school (known at AISM as Preparation or Prep) and continues to Year 4. It covers the first five years of the NSW Primary School. The final two years of Primary School are in the AISM Middle School. Students enter the Junior School with differing levels of basic skills and one of the aims is to consolidate this development. They learn to read, write, talk and listen. They learn thinking, understanding, competence and confidence with numbers, shapes and measurements. They learn to investigate and problem-solve and they learn to be creative.

One element of importance is the teaching of reading as this is an essential area of development for the success of the students in their future schooling. AISM uses a combination of the phonics approach (where students learn the alphabet, the names of the letters and the sounds they make, using them to blend letters together to develop words) and the Look and Say approach (where students learn to recognize whole words or sentences using flash cards). This is often done in small groups and/or individually. Some students also receive support from the Literacy Support teacher either in class or through withdrawal in small groups.

In the Junior School small group work is a feature of the teaching and learning process across the curriculum and is not confined to literacy work. Small group work allows students to build their skills and well as their confidence while learning to work collaboratively.

An important element of the Junior School is outdoor education through the Camp Programme. Year 4 have a three day camp usually in term 2 and Year 3 have a two day camp at the same time. Year 2 do not go on camp but have a sleepover at school which allows them to develop some of the aspects involved in a camp programme without the students being in an unfamiliar environment. School camps are part of the curriculum and attendance at camp is mandatory.

Leadership is another important element of Junior School with Junior School Captains and Vice Captains having a clear role. This includes running Junior School assemblies and, on occasion, being part of whole school events. They are assisted by House Captains, particularly for sporting events and other Junior School competitions. Support is provided for the Captains to assist them to develop their roles. Students from Year 2 to Year 4 elect a class representative to attend the Students' Representative Council meetings.

Preparation (or Prep) is our Pre-school. It is not compulsory for NSW students to attend Pre-school and the administration of curriculum does not come under the BOS. The curriculum offered at AISM in Prep is based on current practice in Australia. It is play based using the philosophy that students of this age learn most effectively through structured play activities rather than formal textbook based study. Students in Prep must have turned 3 years of age before the beginning of the school term; however, preference is given to students who are 4 years of age.

Kindergarten to Year 4

Kindergarten is the first year of mandatory schooling and is often called Year 1 in other systems. Students must be no less than 4 years and 9 months in January of the year they wish to start Kindergarten. Most students will be 5 years of age.

The Junior School curriculum is based on the following Key Learning Areas (KLA) –

- English
- Mathematics
- Science and Technology
- Human Society and Its Environment (Social Sciences)
- Creative and Practical Arts – including Visual Arts, Music and Drama
- Personal Development, Health and Physical Education
- Languages Other Than English – students in all years study Bahasa Malaysia and from Year 2 also study Mandarin. Both are studied at levels appropriate to their age, stage and language background of the student.

Students have a class teacher for most KLAs and specialist teachers in Performing Arts, Languages and Library. Physical Education is conducted by the class teacher with direct assistance from a specialist Physical Education teacher.

Further information is available from the NSW Board of Studies on their website at www.boardofstudies.nsw.edu.au.