



MODERN ENGLISH SCHOOL CAIRO

A GUIDE TO SECONDARY CURRICULUM PATHWAYS 2021

Information for Year 6 Students and Parents

MES Cairo offers two curriculum options in our Secondary School: the British curriculum and the American curriculum. Parents are invited to express their preference for one section or the other for their Year 6 son/daughter. While every effort will be made to place your child in his/her first preference, the final decision will rest with the school.

Year 7 & Year 8 - Key Stage 3 Curriculum (KS3), British Section

A continuation from the British Curriculum taught in our Primary School and a foundation for IGCSEs (Year 9 and 10), AS/A Level or the IB Diploma Programme (DP 11-12)

OR

Grade 7 & Grade 8 - Middle School Program (MS), American Section

A foundation for the American High School Diploma Program taught in Grades 9-12 which includes College Preparatory, Honors, and Advanced Placement courses or the IB Diploma Programme (DP 11-12)

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN SECTIONS:

Quality Education: You have chosen MES Cairo for your children, because of the recognised standards upon which our reputation is built and maintained. Regardless of the curriculum your son/daughter follows in our Secondary school they will be *cared for, challenged and inspired*.

Graduate Profile: The aspirational aims of all MES Cairo students is articulated in our Graduate Profile. This statement is fully embraced by both sections and across all Year/Grade levels

Preparation: The subjects studied, and the numbers of lessons are similar in both sections. There is a difference in that History & Geography are taught as separate subjects in the British Key Stage 3 Programme but are integrated into the Social Studies curriculum in the American Middle School Program. All Curricula options at MES Cairo prepare students well for universities in Egypt or abroad, are taught by experienced, qualified teachers, and satisfy the Ministry of Education's requirements.

Advisory Programmes and Enrichment Opportunities: Homeroom Community Forum (HRCF) lessons, break times, assemblies, scheduled Homeroom, athletics, involvement in After-School Activities, House Competitions and special focus events are features of both Sections.

Student Class/ Homeroom Placements : In both sections, Y/G 7/8, students stay with their Homeroom group for all their subjects. Students are initially placed in Homerooms by their primary teachers, based on teacher observation, CAT/MAP results, and Primary Head Teacher's recommendations.

Classroom Instruction: A variety of formative and summative assessments are utilised, allowing students, teachers and parents to have an understanding of how much progress has been made over the course of instruction. There are opportunities for differentiation within all subjects. All Secondary students are issued with their own password to access our Google Classroom, which enhances the student's learning experiences by allowing access to classroom materials 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Students with Exceptionalities: Support from our Learning Development Department is accessible by all students who have an established need, regardless of which curriculum they follow, including extension through our gifted and talented provision for those students who meet our eligibility criteria.

Subject Areas: Students will study the following subjects:

Subjects	Lessons /2-wk period		Additional Information
English	8		
Mathematics	8		
Science	7		Y7/Y8 – Combined Science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics) G7 - Life Science G8 - Physical Science
Arabic and Religion	4		
French OR Spanish	4		
Physical Education	4		
History Geography	British Section 5	American Section 6	Y7 - 2 Geography/3 History Y8 - 3 Geography/2 History G7 - Ancient History (6 lessons) G8 - Classical World History (6 lessons)
Carousel: Drama Music Art Design Technology	2 2 2 2		Two subjects taken 2 times a week for half a year. - Drama and Music - Art and Design & Technology
Computing*	1		*British Section only *American Section - computer science/programming is taught through the DT curriculum.
HRCF	1		HRCF=Homeroom Community Forum

Assessment: Students may be assessed in a variety of ways, including:

- Field Work
- Group Work
- Individual Work
- Practical Work
- Electronic Portfolios
- Classroom Participation
- Paper and Electronic Tests
- Midyear and End of Year Assessments
- Collaborative Projects and Presentations

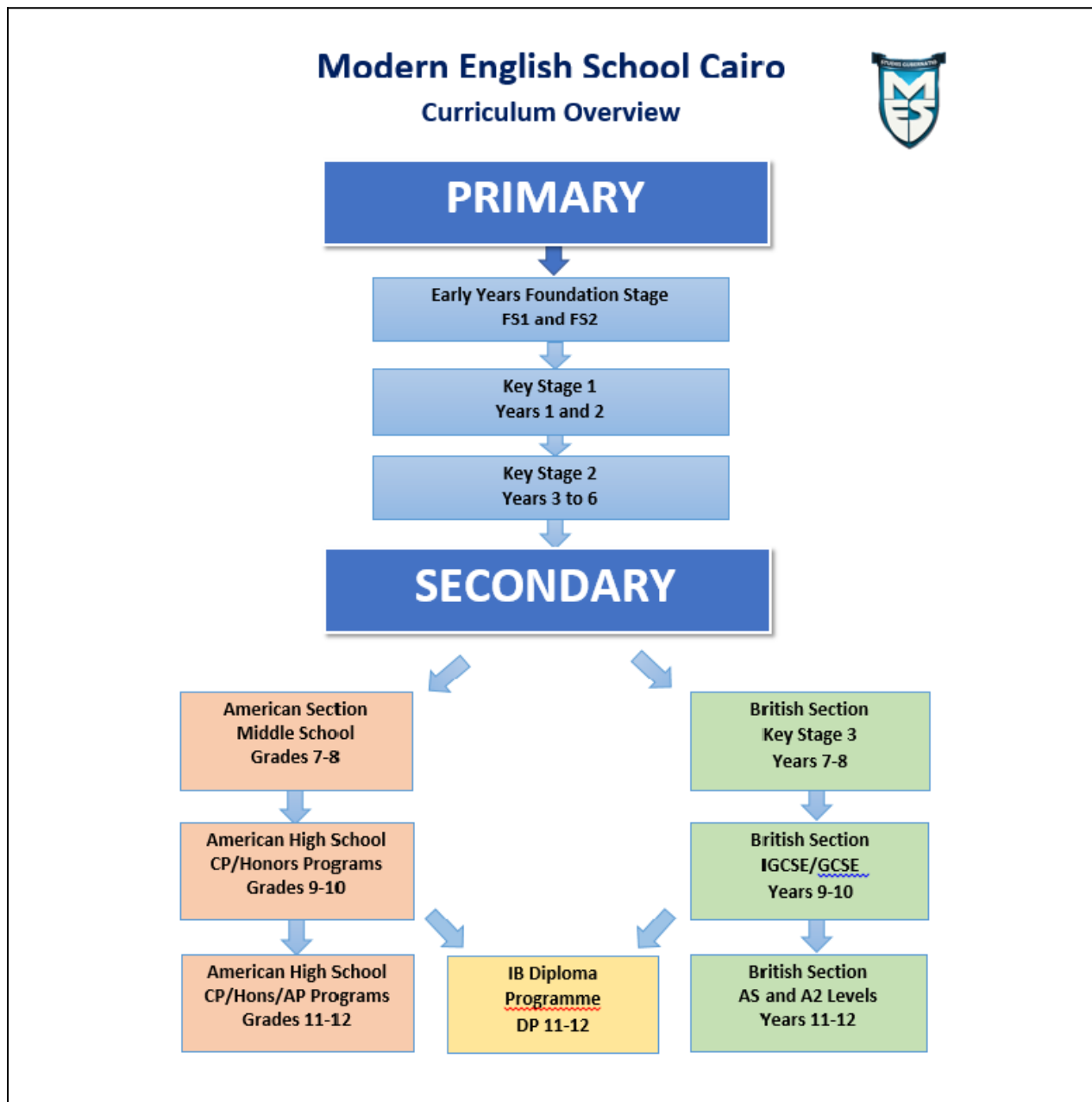
Technology: All students in Secondary use technology to support their learning; our BYOD policy applies to all Years and Grade levels.

CHOOSING A PREFERENCE FOR YOUR CHILD:

By offering two programmes at the transition point between Primary and Secondary at MES Cairo, we aim to ensure that all students have the opportunity to achieve their ambitions and to meet the aspirations of their parents. The choice is often a simple matter of personal preference.

Your choice will also be influenced by the programmes offered later in your child's educational career. Once a curriculum pathway has been decided upon students should remain in their chosen section until graduation, exceptions being those who wish to undertake the IB Diploma programme in their final two years of Secondary.

- If you are intending for your son/daughter to follow a British Curriculum, it is individually designed from an extensive range of subjects which lead to IGCSEs, AS and A Level offered through the recognised UK examination authority, Cambridge Assessment International Examinations then Year 7 and 8 is the best foundation.
- If you are intending for your son/daughter to follow an American High School Diploma program in Grades 9-12 which is designed around a liberal arts education guided by the National Common Core Curriculum and provides the option of an individually selected Honors college-level classes and Advanced Placement classes offered through the US College Board then Grade 7 and 8 is the best foundation.
- Either programme will prepare your child for the IB Diploma programme which follows as an option after Grade/Year 10.



The British Curriculum: Key Stage 3

We offer an outstanding programme for students entering Year 7 of the British Secondary Section. We work closely with Primary colleagues to ensure continuity between Key Stage 2, the end of the Primary phase, and the beginning of KS3, the start of the Secondary phase. We are regarded as being 'outstanding', not just in terms of our own reflection and review, but by the regulating body of British Schools Overseas (BSO) who inspect and accredit our British programmes on a 3-year cycle and have offered the following judgements:

"The curriculum provides rich opportunities for high quality learning."

"The quality of curriculum planning and implementation enable all students to achieve well, exceeding English National and International Baccaalaureate averages."

"The school is highly successful in helping students to develop their personal skills and qualities: students are thoughtful and well behaved. Students are highly motivated learners. By the time they leave school, they have the personal and social skills needed to move successfully to the next stage of their lives."

What is the British Section Key Stage 3 Curriculum?

The KS3 programme builds on the KS1 and KS2 programmes your child has been studying in the primary section at MES Cairo and is a part of the National Curriculum for England. The programme was introduced into schools in England and those offering an English curriculum internationally to ensure consistently high standards across schools, to facilitate transfers between schools, to enhance public understanding of what children are learning in school, and to best prepare students for success at UK universities. It is supported by extensive documentation to assist teachers in planning varied and well-resourced lessons and parents in helping their children with their studies and students in their learning. In addition to a substantial library of texts, this documentation is readily available from websites such as: [National Curriculum](#)

Aims of the Key Stage 3 Curriculum:

Key Stage 3 has two broad aims. These aims provide the context within which we have developed our own schemes of learning relevant to MES Cairo students.

Aim 1: To provide opportunities for all students to increase their knowledge, deepen their understanding and develop the skills needed to extend and apply this knowledge and understanding independently.

Aim 2: To promote students' personal, moral, social and cultural development and to prepare them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of life in a rapidly changing and shrinking world.

British educational traditions have developed over centuries, encouraged and monitored by the Government and led by outstanding institutions such as the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Britain's history is tied to countries throughout the world and its society is multi-faith, multicultural and multi-racial. Its education system is the product of all these influences.

An English National Curriculum education concerns itself with the development of the whole person. Whilst firmly rooted in traditions of scholarship and learning, the British curriculum enthusiastically embraces wider objectives. Young people are expected to develop their potential to explore and discover the world around them, to think for themselves and to form opinions, to relate to others, to develop physical wellbeing through sport and to gain experiences in taking responsibility. Virtues such as honesty, truth, justice, tolerance and a sense of duty are integral to the curriculum, as is support and care for young people. These traditions are intrinsic to the ethos of MES Cairo.

Global Perspectives:

In order to support our aims, students study Global Perspectives in Key Stage 3. The emphasis is on developing students' ability to think critically about a range of global issues where there is always more than one point of view. Learning takes place throughout traditional subjects in and out of the classroom where students further develop understanding through their 'real life' experiences and outstanding transferable skills, including critical thinking, research and collaboration. Students refine the necessary skills in order to become a successful learner and develop the personal attributes that are linked to the MES Cairo Graduate Profile and our MES Cairo Elements.

- Academic integrity, confidence in working with information and ideas - their own and those of others
- Readiness to learn
- Responsive to and respectful of others
- Ready to make a difference

Students take part in creative workshops, one day visits to local areas in Cairo and the opportunity to attend residential excursions to compliment the work that they do in the classroom.

CAT4 Tests and the PASS survey:

At the end of Year 6, 8 and 10, students undergo a CAT4 cognitive ability test. The test is designed to understand student strengths and weaknesses and an insight into how our students learn best. The test can also highlight gifted and talented students and if students are underachieving. This allows the school to address patterns and adapt teaching methods to suit individuals or group needs, ensuring feedback is appropriate and targets are achievable. Students also take the PASS survey, Pupils Attitudes to Self and Learning which assists the school to identify areas for improvement in terms of student intervention and well being.

Plan-4-Grad:

Students begin a 4-year programme of counseling for their future choices from November in Year 8. They take part in workshops focusing upon the different skills and qualifications needed for different professions and spend time researching the requirements of various universities in Egypt, the UK and beyond. All students meet with a member of SSLT to discuss their choices. They review progress on a regular basis and work alongside teaching staff to achieve the progress required to ensure their success.

What happens after the British Section Key Stage 3?

At the successful completion of Year 8, students progress on to Year 9, where they begin their two-year preparation for external examinations in 8 or more IGCSE/GCSE subjects at the end of Year 10 (KS4). By completing IGCSE/GCSE in 8 or more subjects, students will be well prepared for embarking on either AS/A Levels or the IB Diploma Programme, both of which are rigorous, academic courses.

Cambridge Checkpoint Assessments:

By MOE decree all students must take Aadidaya in Y9, as well as a recognised equivalency examination. At MES Cairo, we choose for students to take Cambridge Assessment International Examinations Checkpoint examinations in English, Mathematics and Science. Our students are well prepared for the tests as content is covered in the Curriculum in Year 8. [Cambridge International Checkpoint Information](#)

A brief insight into IGCSE/GCSE in Key Stage 4:

IGCSE stands for International General Certificate of Secondary Education. It is designed for students in schools throughout the world and the syllabuses are international in content and approach.

IGCSE assessment is by final examination at the end of Year 10. Students are prepared throughout the 2-year course for the examinations, allowing teachers time to give students guidance on how to improve their performance. Students mature over this period, develop and hone their examination technique and are assessed when they are at their peak. Students who find exams a motivation, who work conscientiously and who follow teachers' advice are successful on this programme.

IGCSE grades either are awarded on an eight-point scale, A* to G. Grade A* is the top grades for the syllabi taken. In Egypt, Arab students are allowed to take the Extended Entry papers only (where the syllabus provides an option). Universities often specify grades A*- C in their entrance requirements. The examinations are set by the Cambridge International Examinations Authority and students' answer scripts which are sent to the Examination Board in England for marking. The rigour of the Examination Boards' procedures ensures that IGCSE qualifications are recognised by universities and colleges world-wide.

We offer a wide range of subjects, from which students can design their own course in Key Stage 4. Only Mathematics and English are compulsory; students select their other 6 option subjects from the list that follows. If they know what career they ultimately wish to follow, they can begin to specialise in related subjects. If they are unsure about their future or are thinking about joining the International Baccalaureate Diploma

Programme in Y11, they are encouraged to maintain a broad balance of subjects. The combination of on-going teacher support throughout the two years of sustained study and the experience of final examinations provides an excellent base for success in both the IB Diploma and A Levels and for university study thereafter. Students take 8 IGCSE/GCSE subjects (and possibly more if they are invited onto the extension courses of IGCSE Global Perspectives, Arabic and PE).

It is our intention to offer the following option subjects at MES Cairo for students entering Year 9 in 2024: English as a First Language, English as a Second Language, Mathematics, Biology, Physics, Chemistry, Business Studies, Economics, Travel and Tourism, Geography, History, Spanish, French, English Literature, Art and Design, Design and Technology (Resistant Materials or Graphic Products), Computer Science, Information Communication Technology, Drama, Global Perspectives, Physical Education, Arabic First Language.

In addition, students must study the following subjects to meet the Ministry of Education requirements: Arabic, Religious Studies, History and Geography (Egyptian Ministry Syllabus – Y9) , Civil Studies (Egyptian Ministry Syllabus – Y10 & 11)

Core Physical Education (PE) and Homeroom Community Forum (HRCF) are also continued in Y9-12.

IGCSE Results:

Students at Modern English School Cairo complete their IGCSE exams one year earlier than their counterparts in the UK, with extraordinary results. Our students continue to earn top accolades in Egypt’s CIE Award Ceremonies as highest achievers in the country for individual subjects as well as across multiple IGCSE’s.

AS/A Level Progression:

If students in Year 11 and 12 decide to follow the route of AS and A level, they will be able to select from the following options: English Literature, Mathematics, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Geography, History, Psychology, Business Studies, Economics, Spanish, French, Arabic, Computer Science, Information Technology and Drama.

IBDP Progression:

Students entering KS3 and then IGCSEs are well-prepared for the International Baccalaureate Diploma programme, if they wish to follow this curriculum from Year 11.

University Challenge:

In recent years, our students have earned offers from universities across the world including UK universities: Cambridge, Imperial College London, University College London, Bath, Warwick, London School of Economics, Manchester and many others. More MES Cairo students head to universities in the UK than elsewhere. Our British graduates also progress on to top universities in Germany, US and Canada, Holland and Spain.

Our MES Cairo Graduate Profile:

An MES Cairo graduate is:	An MES Cairo graduate can:	An MES Cairo graduate shows:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A leader •Confident •Articulate •Flexible •Pro-active •Reflective •Principled •Independent •Resourceful •Resilient •Inspired •Visionary •Creative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Communicate fluently in the English language •Intelligently express their views •Problem solve •Lead by example •Recognise personal strengths and passions •Relate well to others •Take appropriate risks •Make a difference 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Integrity •Initiative •Empathy •Excellent interpersonal skills •Appreciation of individuals’ rights and responsibilities •Cultural awareness •Respect for self and others •Global understanding •Commitment to lifelong learning •Understanding of the Egyptian culture and the Arabic language

The American Curriculum: Middle School

The Middle School Program sets a culture of high expectations that prepares students for the challenging studies of the American High School Diploma in Grades 9-12. Students in the American Middle School Program are introduced to a range of academic, social, and co-curricular experiences that will develop students into thoughtful, creative, caring, and healthy individuals. A positive Middle School environment motivates students to master their social and academic skills at grade-level standards, or beyond.

A Path to Success:

Success for students in an American curriculum context begins with teachers who are specialists teaching in the middle grades. Middle school teachers are skilled at providing students with exciting and challenging opportunities to explore a range of topics and experiences. It is a time when students begin to organise their learning and understand the connection that what they learn in middle school is the foundation for their success in high school.

The 7th and 8th grade teaching teams provide academic, social, and emotional support during this time of transition through concrete learning within the classroom, but also through the use of learning through experience and reflection outside of the classroom. Key features that are used in the classroom to engage students include

- Choices in assignment and assessments
- Working with partners and in teams to develop key skills; sharing of learning
- Thinking creatively and as a high level
- Challenging students to develop their own ideas
- Technology and research based teaching strategies

Learning Skills: critical and creative thinking - collaborating - communicating

The curriculum in Middle School is based upon the [National Common Core Curriculum](#) which was created to ensure all students are ready for success after high school. The *Common Core* focuses on developing the critical thinking, problem-solving, and analytical skills students will need to be successful. The standards also promote literacy skills across all content areas and teachers of all subjects focus on the following key areas:

Reading non-fiction

Writing in all classes

Supporting arguments with evidence

Reading about science and social studies

Reading at Lexile level and seeking challenge

Learning content specific words

Students enhance their learning by engaging in experiential learning both inside and outside of school and by taking part in fine and performing arts, computer technologies, world languages, health, and physical fitness. Throughout Middle School students are encouraged to take risks in areas they might not have experienced before. This enables them to experience a wide array of opportunities prior to deciding their educational path in high school.

Week Without Walls:

Students in our Middle School also experience learning outside the classroom through a variety of enrichment activities which fosters the understanding of how all content learned connects to one another and how it can make the world in which they live a better place. The Week Without Walls Program aims to provide middle school students a variety of challenging and inspiring learning opportunities that extend and enhance learning beyond the classroom. In Grade 7 students explore historical and contemporary Egypt focusing on Egypt's culture, natural resources, and past and present innovations. Students in Grade 8 explore 21st century innovations and how new technologies and advances are impacting the world and Egypt. Over the two-year period a variety of opportunities are offered to help students develop a capstone project that explores innovative solutions solving contemporary problems and issues.

Checking for Understanding:

The purpose of assessment at all grade levels is to determine a student's level of mastery of the content. Teachers work as a team to enable students to demonstrate through both formative and summative assessments the overall depth and breadth of the learned content. Formative assessments that occur regularly are utilised to provide feedback to students and teachers about how students are progressing in their learning, while summative assessments serve as a cumulative evaluation of the content learned.

- **MAP:** The 'Measure of Academic Progress' tests are administered every fall and spring to students at the end of Year 6 and in Grades 7, 8, and 9. This assessment measures the academic progress of each individual child, and serves as a diagnostic tool to help teachers customise instruction to each student's unique capabilities.
- **PSAT/NMSQT:** The 'Preliminary Scholastic Aptitude Test; National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test' is a standardised test that provides first hand practice for the SAT. All G10 students take the PSAT at MES Cairo. Any student interested in attending university in the United States, is a US passport holder, and would like to compete for the National Merit Scholarship, should register and retake the exam in G11.
- **SAT:** The 'Scholastic Aptitude Test' measures the verbal, mathematical, and reasoning of a student to forecast their likely success at the university level. The writing skill section in the new SAT is optional. Many universities use the SAT as one indicator of a student's college readiness. For more information, visit www.collegeboard.com.
- **ACT:** The 'American College Testing' assessment is designed to a students' general educational development and their ability to complete college-level work. Tests cover 4 skill areas: English, mathematics, reading, and science. For more information, visit www.act.org.

Individual Graduation Plan (IGP):

We are committed to assisting students in developing a course of study that meets their academic goals. Beginning in Grade 8 and continuing early in the second term of each year, students are asked to choose courses for the next academic year. During the registration process, an advisor will talk with each student as to which courses are appropriate based upon ability, performance, and future plans. A comprehensive 4-year plan is created during the Individual Graduation Plan (IGP) advisement meeting. This plan is then revisited each year to ensure that students remain on track for graduation and future university plans. Students are encouraged to research universities and career choices by visiting <https://mescairo.mymajors.com/college-major-quiz/> to receive relevant and up-to-date information.

What happens after the American Section Middle School Program?

The American High School Program offers a challenging academic curriculum connecting the various content areas, fostering artistic appreciation and expression, nurturing the individual talents of each student, developing responsible leadership skills, and instilling the ethic of 21st Century global citizenship. The American High School offers students a rigorous curriculum with options to enroll in Honors and Advanced Placement (AP) classes. Students are also highly prepared during Grades 9 and 10 to successfully enter the IB Diploma Program at the end of Grade 10 if they choose.

American High School Graduation Requirements:

Most year-long courses earn one credit. A minimum of 28.0 credits earned in grades 9-12 is required for a college preparatory MES Cairo diploma in the American Program. In order to graduate from MES Cairo, a student must meet set course requirements and attendance guidelines. These requirements are meant to serve as a minimum standard rather than the standard which students should strive to achieve.

Besides the core content classes of English, Math, Science and Social Studies, students have the opportunity to choose from an extensive range of traditional and contemporary subjects to create your own uniquely challenging program of study. Since classes are participatory by nature, students learn the content while developing life skills and focus on critical and creative thinking/problem solving, written, visual and oral communication, and collaboration.

Our elective offering in 2021-2022 follows: Computer Applications, Digital Animations, Economics, Business Studies, Multimedia, Spanish, Psychology, Media and Literacy Studies, Physical Education, French, Theatre, Choir, Art and Design, Digital Visual Media, Photography, Statistics, Pre-calculus, Calculus, Physics

Advanced Placement (AP):

The College Board's Advanced Placement Program (AP) enables willing and academically prepared students to pursue college-level studies. Students who obtain high scores on the examinations can typically earn college credit and/or placement into advanced courses in college. The following AP courses are offered at MES Cairo: Art (2D or 3D Design), World History, Calculus (AB and BC), English Language and Composition, Art History, Statistics, Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, Chemistry, Biology, Physics (I and II), Comparative Government, Psychology

University Challenge:

American Section graduates have matriculated to some of the top schools in the UK and the United States. Universities in the United States that American Section students were accepted to include: University of California – Los Angeles, University of California – San Diego, New York University, Cornell University, Tulane University, University of Chicago, Carnegie-Mellon University, University of Tennessee-Knoxville, and the University of Arizona. Some of the UK universities that our graduates are attending are: London School of Economics, King's College, University of Warwick, University of Kent, University of Surrey, De Montfort University – Leicester.

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