



AMSTERDAM LIBERAL ARTS & SCIENCES ACADEMY



# School Brochure International Profile

2025 – 2026

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## Foreword

In the 2025 - 2026 school year we are excited to continue building upon the strong foundation of our International Baccalaureate programme while implementing several important developments. Our continuous efforts remain focused on achieving our overarching goals of sustaining and enhancing our position as an innovative and modern school, effectively bridging the gap between international and traditional Dutch educational institutions. In doing so, our primary focus is addressing the needs and preferences of 21st-century learners, irrespective of their background, ethnicity, or mother tongue.

This year marks significant updates to our programme structure! We are proud to announce that our Diploma Programme 1 (first year) students have begun their studies with the updated syllabi for Visual Arts, Design Technology, Psychology and Extended Essay, preparing them for examinations in 2027. A process that will gradually be rolled out for all subjects over the next year or two. To better serve our growing international community, we have also expanded to two DP1 groups! Welcoming twice as many students in DP1 this year.

This brochure is tailored to current and prospective International Baccalaureate students and their parents. It provides a comprehensive introduction to our school, clarifying our educational values and approaches to teaching and learning, while offering detailed information about our IB Diploma Programme.

Matthijs Uivel & Daphne Oosterbaan  
IB Coordinators, ALASCA Amsterdam

## Introduction to our school

ALASCA began with 90 students in August 2016, housed in two small temporary school buildings in the city centre of Amsterdam. Our school was launched with the explicit goal of enriching the city of Amsterdam with an innovative school boasting a unique and modern educational profile. The school offers education at the pre-university level, inspired by a Liberal Arts and Sciences approach. Our curriculum consists of modules and projects that are often interdisciplinary and sometimes thematic.

## Educational approach

To help students to fulfil their potential and become the leaders, thinkers, academics, artists of tomorrow, we have developed our own educational approach. Key elements of this approach are:

1. We offer a broad academic development from a strong liberal arts and sciences curriculum with great attention paid to inquiry-based learning within interdisciplinary modules and projects. We thereby aim to offer students training and experience in analysing complex academic problems and real-life situations.
2. We encourage students to develop their 'moral compass', thereby aiming to help students in their moral citizenship, in both local and international contexts. We offer courses in philosophy and ethics, as well as yearly service-learning projects;
3. We provide students with a modern curriculum, focussing on essay writing, debating, coding and programming, research skills, (digital) design and art, and conceptual thought. Today's curricula however, always runs the risk of becoming outdated for tomorrow's challenges and problems. For that reason, we insist on helping students to develop metacognitive skills, enabling them to understand and manage their own learning and development in the years to come.

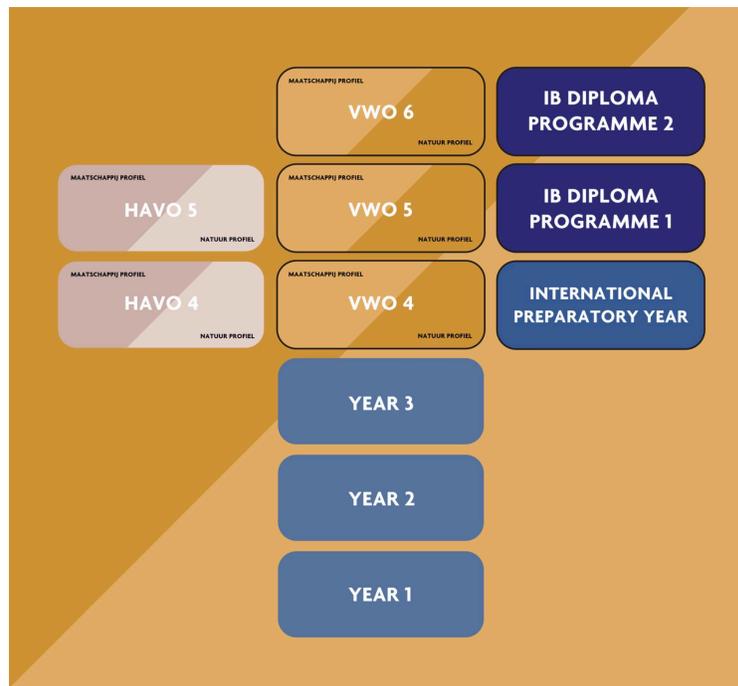
## The International Profile at ALASCA

### General curriculum structure

During our **junior years** (years 1 to 3), our school implements a 'Dutch core curriculum' that is mandatory for all students aged 11-15. This core curriculum includes various modules and projects, covering all learning outcomes as prescribed by the Dutch Ministry of Education. Alongside the core curriculum, students have the opportunity to choose elective modules (*keuzemodules*), enabling them to expand and deepen their knowledge and skills. For students who require additional time and/or support in completing (parts of) the core curriculum, there are options to participate in 'deficiency modules.'

In the **senior years** of our school, encompassing year 4 and above (ages 15-18), students have 3 ‘track’ options:

1. **Dutch havo Track** (Higher General Secondary Education): This track spans two years, covering school years 4 and 5, and prepares students for higher vocational education. Completion of the Havo program also grants eligibility for enrolment in vwo or IB tracks.
2. **Dutch vwo Track** (Pre-University Education): This track spans three years, covering school years 4, 5, and 6, and represents the Dutch pre-university track.
3. **International Profile Track:** This track spans three years, with a specific Year 4 designated as the *International Preparatory Year* (IPY), Year 5 and Year 6 comprising the *International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme* (IB DP). This track is the international pre-university programme where students will be able to obtain a bilingual internationally recognised diploma. In the International Profile our commitment is to offer a curriculum that aligns with high educational ambition, providing an alternative to the curricula offered by other Dutch and international schools.



**School career flow chart:** havo: Senior General Secondary Education; vwo: pre-University Education (vwo+ refers to the additional academic challenges offered at our school); IPY: International Preparatory Year; IB DP: International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. Orange indicates “final year / external



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examinations”

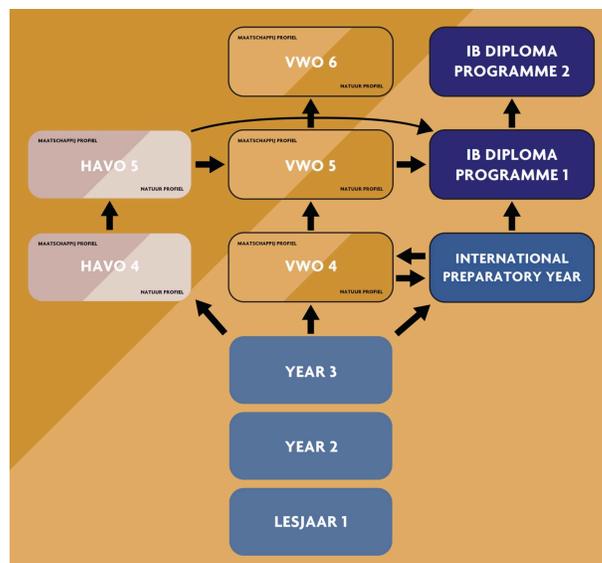
In the ALASCA International Profile, students follow courses that are aligned with the International Baccalaureate standards across the globe. We currently offer:

<b>International Profile Year 4 - International Preparatory Year (IPY)</b>	<b>International Preparatory Year Subjects</b>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Dutch</li><li>2. English</li><li>3. Spanish or Independent German Study with School Guidance for external admissions</li><li>4. Eras of Inquiries (History   Philosophy)</li><li>5. Applied Economic Principles (Economics &amp; Business)</li><li>6. Perspectives on Societal Studies (Social Studies   Philosophy)</li><li>7. Mathematics Levels: Fundamentals to Advance (Equivalent of Dutch Mathematics A/B/D)</li><li>8. Living Systems and Behavioural Dynamics (Biology   Psychology)</li><li>9. Visual Creativity and Tech Craft (Arts   Technology)</li><li>10. Physical Education / PE (non Diploma Subject)</li></ol>	
<b>International Profile Year 5 and Year 6 - Diploma Programme (DP)</b>	
<b>Core subjects</b>	<b>Diploma Subjects</b> Each student is required to take at least three (but no more than four) subjects at the Higher Level (HL) and the remaining subjects at Standard Level (SL).

<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Theory of Knowledge (ToK)</li> <li>2. Creativity, Action, Service (CAS)</li> <li>3. Extended Essay (EE)</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Language A: Dutch Language and Literature (HL)</li> <li>1. Language A: English Language and Literature (HL/SL)</li> <li>2. Language Acquisition: Dutch ab initio (SL) <i>Dutch for individuals who are not native speakers.</i></li> <li>3. Psychology (HL) <i>Study human behaviour from a cognitive, biological and social perspective.</i></li> <li>4. Design Technology (SL) <i>Designing products and understanding materials.</i></li> <li>5. Maths Application and Interpretation (SL/HL)</li> <li>6. Visual Arts (SL/HL) <i>Making and comparing different types of art and artistic styles.</i></li> </ol>
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## First year of the International Profile – the Preparatory Year (IPY)

During this year, students who are committed to obtaining an international diploma will embark on an English-language curriculum. Here, they will develop the essential skills to enhance their prospects of successfully completing the International Programme.



Students have the option to transfer to and from the IPY year, as well as transfer to the IB DP in year 5.

## Second year of the International Profile – the Diploma Programme (DP1)

Students at ALASCA, as well as transfers from other schools or students coming from abroad, have the opportunity to commence the International Profile in DP1.

The challenging Diploma Programme serves as the pre-academic curriculum, preparing students for their international exams and admission to universities or universities of applied sciences (Hogeschool). Throughout the first and second terms of DP1, students gain a deeper understanding of how the perspectives of the six subject disciplines complement each other. On a practical level, they become familiar with the coursework expectations for the internal assessment (part of the international exam). Towards the end of the year, students will engage in ‘mock’ exams, receiving predicted grades for the final exam and pre-university applications.

## Third year of the International Profile - the Diploma Programme (DP2)

In DP2 classes, students fine tune their knowledge and skills within the core topics and diploma subjects, preparing for the May Exam session. Students provide evidence of their learning progress through various products: the extended essay, the Theory of Knowledge essay, a portfolio of CAS experiences, and various items for the Internal Assessment of the six diploma subjects.

### **Exams and Grade boundaries**

Exam assessments consist of several components. Each of these components are assigned a percentage or weight. IB uses a one-to-seven point marking scheme and a grade is reached by scoring in specific ‘point zones’. These zones are called Grade Boundaries and may change between subjects or even between assignments/exams. A typical Grade Boundary looks like this (in this case the student can earn a total of 30 points):

Grade	From	To
1	0	7
2	8	9
3	10	13
4	14	15
5	16	17
6	18	19
7	20	30

Source: MAY 2024 Grade boundaries, International Baccalaureate

## Resits of School Assignments

During both Diploma Programme years students are generally not allowed to resit school work. This includes class assignments, mock exams or submissions for the Internal Assessments. However, if any of these requirements are not met because of circumstances beyond the student's control, a student may request a resit through the Exam Committee.

The student must send a written request to the Exam Committee:

[examination@alasca.espritscholen.nl](mailto:examination@alasca.espritscholen.nl)

### Including:

- Which exam, assignment or requirement was not met
- The reason for missing the deadline
- The expected outcome of a potential resit
- A clear outline of what the student will do to avoid future missed deadlines

The Exam Committee will review the request and make a binding decision on whether a resit will be granted. The Subject Teacher will be consulted as part of this process.

## May Examination Period 2027 - Important Information for Students and Parents

The IB Diploma Programme exams take place during the months of April and May. This approximately three-week period represents the culmination of two years of intensive study that demands careful preparation.



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Due to the internationally organised May Exam session during the Dutch 'meivakantie' students will not have a traditional May break during this period. Students must remain fully available throughout this entire examination period, no family holidays should be planned during this time. Each student will complete exams for all six diploma subjects, typically consisting of multiple papers per subject distributed across the examination weeks.

ALASCA will provide comprehensive support throughout this process. Students will receive personalized examination timetables well in advance, allowing for proper preparation and planning. Teachers will conduct final revision/feedback sessions, and study spaces will remain available during the examination period. But also the importance of family support during this crucial period cannot be overstated. Understanding and encouragement from parents and guardians helps students maintain focus and manage the natural stress that accompanies these high-stakes exams. The results, published in early July, will determine university admission outcomes and represent the official completion of the IB Diploma Programme.

## How graduation is calculated

The IB outlines clear deliverables and requirements for students to graduate. These are:

- Students graduate by reaching an overall point total of 24 or above.
- Students may not fail Theory of Knowledge (ToK) or the Extended Essay (EE).
- Students must successfully complete the CAS (Creativity, Activity, Service) requirement.
- Students may not score a '1' grade on any subject. Students may not have more than two '2' grades total across all subjects (HL and SL combined).
- Students may not have more than three '3' grades (or below) overall.
- Students must have at least 12 points among all Higher Level subjects.
- Students must have at least 9 points among all Standard Level subjects.

## Formative and Summative decision moments

ALASCA and specifically the Exam Committee will organise an 'Access to the Exam' meeting in Term 7 to review students' readiness for the May Exams. Though the primary indicator for this is an average Subject Grade of **4** (or higher), and calculated across Term 5, 6 and 7, other elements like completion towards the Extended Essay, CAS projects, ToK, attendance and the completion of Internal Assessments may be deciding factors.



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If the Exam Committee finds a student not ready to enter the May Exam, the student is automatically transferred to Term 4 to complete the academic year in DP1.

This policy serves an important protective function for students. By making this decision in Term 7, we prevent students from taking exams they are not adequately prepared for, which would result in them being out of formal education from the exam period (April/May) until September. Instead, by transferring students back to Term 4, they continue their learning within a structured educational programme, receive proper support to address their challenges, and can approach the DP2 year with a stronger foundation. This decision protects students from making choices that would negatively impact both their educational continuity and their prospects for success in the Diploma Programme.

Additionally this policy helps us to prepare students for the rigorous demands of the IB Exams and guides us in maintaining the integrity and reputation of our programme. The 'Access to the Exams' decision by the Exam Committee is in many ways a final hurdle towards the Exams but far from the only substantial 'checkpoint' in our curriculum.

Other notable checkpoints are:

- At the end of Term 1 - Term 3 tutors will provide formative 'Mid-Term Reports', followed by Student-Tutor-Parent talks.
- At the end of Term 4 the tutor will share an official 'Progress Report', that may include our advice to redo DP1.
- During Term 5 and 6 increasingly more emphasis is put on Mid-Term Reports, to signal any concerns early and act accordingly. Followed by Student-Tutor-Parent talks.
- At the end of Term 7 a binding 'Access to the Exam' decision is made by the Exam Committee. Either admitting a student into the May Exams, or transferring a student to Term 4 in DP1 for the remainder of the school year.

## November Exam sessions, retakes and remarks

In case students do not graduate in the May Exam session, it may be possible to resit individual subjects in the November session, for which additional costs apply. However, this is limited to a maximum of 3 subjects.

Students must submit a written request to the Exam Committee at [examination@alasca.espritscholen.nl](mailto:examination@alasca.espritscholen.nl) to request permission to resit subjects.

The Exam Committee will only approve retake requests if the student has:

- an overall exam point total not lower than 22 points
- the chosen subject to retake stands at a grade 2 or above
- subject teachers confirm a reasonable chance of upgrading the exam grade

The Exam Committee makes the final binding decision on whether retakes are permitted.

Again, these requirements exist to protect students from undertaking retakes without a reasonable chance of success. If a student begins a November retake session without adequate preparation or realistic prospects for improvement, they will miss more than half a year of structured education (from May until January), leaving them poorly prepared for the subsequent May examination session. By carefully evaluating each retake request, the Exam Committee ensures that students only pursue retakes when there is a genuine opportunity for success, thereby protecting their educational continuity and long-term prospects.

In some cases it is possible to 'remark' individual exam elements (papers, IA or Core Subject deliverable). This is however limited to a maximum of 3 exam elements (individual papers or IA's for example).

## Appeals Procedure

Students and parents have the right to appeal decisions made by the Exam Committee, including but not limited to the 'Access to the Exam' decision. If you disagree with a decision made by the Exam Committee, you may submit a formal written appeal within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

Your appeal should be sent to: [examination@alasca.espritscholen.nl](mailto:examination@alasca.espritscholen.nl)

### The appeal must include:

- The specific decision being appealed
- Clear grounds for the appeal
- Any supporting documentation or evidence
- The desired outcome

For guidance on the appeals process, please contact your tutor or career counsellor.

## Time table

The timetable at ALASCA looks like this (school year 2025-2026 only):

08.30h	School building open
09.30h	Lesson 1

12.00h	Lunch break
12.30h	Lesson 2
15.00h	Lesson 3 or extended study time
16.00h	End of last Class

## Parental Contribution for IB Diploma Programme students

Parents/guardians of students who follow the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme pay a parental contribution to cover the additional costs of this programme such as the annual fee to the International Baccalaureate Organisation and the exam fees.

This parental contribution does not include the costs for international travel nor does it cover the costs for resitting exams.

The annual parental fee is €1250,- per year.

This fee covers the following costs<sup>1</sup>:

Student activities and additional learning materials	€650,-
Examination fees (total costs made in DP2 are approx €700) <sup>2</sup>	€350,-
Costs to remain authorised as an IB World school	€200,-
Solidarity fund IBDP <sup>3</sup>	€50,-

## Admission to the International Profile Year (IPY) in year 4

Enrolment in the International Profile Year (IPY) is open to the following categories of students:

- Students who completed year 3 at ALASCA

<sup>1</sup> Costs could be adjusted for academic year 2025-2026

<sup>2</sup> Excluding the exam fees for re-sitting of exam papers

<sup>3</sup> The multi-year IB solidarity fund is used to financially support talented students and their parents when they cannot fully meet the costs of participating in the IB Diploma Programme



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- Students with a 3 vwo report card of their school providing admission to 4 vwo;
- Students with a havo report card and special circumstances that apply for the International Profile Year e.g. English speaking at home.
- Students who are proficient in English and have an academic record sufficient to enter year 4 of pre-university education (vwo).
- All students are required to send a Letter of Motivation to the IB Admission Team.

## Returning to regular education at havo or vwo level in the International Profile Year (year 4)

Students may choose to return to the regular (Dutch) education track at ALASCA at two specific points during the International Profile Year.

The first, at the end of Term 2. When students have the option to transfer to 'Periode 3' and complete year 4 in the regular (Dutch) format.

The second, at the end of Term 4. When students have the option to transfer to 'Periode 1' of the regular (Dutch) education track at the start of the following academic year. Note that this transfer means students have to redo year 4.

## Admission to the Diploma Programme (DP) in year 5

Enrolment in the IB Diploma Programme will be open to the following categories of students:

- Students who successfully complete the International Profile Year (IPY)
- Students with a 4 vwo report card of their school providing admission to 5 vwo;
- Students with a completed havo diploma;
- Students who are proficient in Dutch and English and have an academic record sufficient to enter year 5 of pre-university education (vwo), such as a certificate of completion for the MYP of another international certificate or diploma.
- All students are required to send a Letter of Motivation to the IB Admission Team.

Due to the challenging and academic nature of the Diploma Programme and the limited number of places available, admission is selective. All students interested in enrollment in our Diploma Programme are invited to enter our [admissions procedure](#).



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## Important Notice Regarding Further Education

While the IB Diploma Programme is internationally recognized, completion of our specific IB programme does **not** automatically guarantee admission to all universities or university programmes. Different universities and study programmes have varying admission requirements regarding subject choices, levels (HL/SL), and minimum grades.

Students and parents are responsible for researching the specific entry requirements of their intended universities and study programmes well in advance. We strongly recommend checking these requirements during the DP1 year to ensure your subject choices align with your future study goals.

For questions about university admission requirements, please consult with our career counsellors at [decanaat@alasca.espritscholen.nl](mailto:decanaat@alasca.espritscholen.nl)

## Esprit schools

ALASCA is part of a larger school board: Esprit scholengroep. Esprit scholen groep consists of 15 schools, offering both primary and secondary education.

More information about Esprit Schools is available at:

<https://www.espritscholen.nl/home/over-esprit/about-esprit-school>

## Contact:

For admission advice: [decanaat@alasca.espritscholen.nl](mailto:decanaat@alasca.espritscholen.nl) (career counsellors)  
E-mail International Profile: [contact.int@alasca.espritscholen.nl](mailto:contact.int@alasca.espritscholen.nl)  
General information: [info@alasca.espritscholen.nl](mailto:info@alasca.espritscholen.nl)