

# GLOBAL CURRICULUM COMPARISON

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# Introduction

In the constantly evolving landscape of education, the curriculum stands as a cornerstone, defining what students learn, how they learn it, and what skills they can acquire in their educational journey. With globalization and the rapid advancement of technology, educators across the world are faced with the challenge of molding curricula that equip students with the requisite skills for an increasingly interconnected world.

# American GED

The GED® testing programme makes it possible to earn the equivalent of a secondary school leaving certificate to facilitate employment or entry to further studies. Created in 1942 in the US as a second chance opportunity, today, more than 20 million people have passed the GED® test.

# IGCSE + AS Level

IGCSE and AS Level are popular international qualifications giving students many subjects to choose from.

Exam boards are organisations that offer qualifications to students, and it's their job to produce exam papers, mark your work and award your grade. There are three main boards: Cambridge, Pearson Edexcel and Oxford International AQA.

These qualifications are aligned with the qualifications taken in England.

# IB Diploma

The International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme is a two-year educational program primarily aimed at students aged 16 to 19. It's known for its rigorous curriculum and is recognized by many universities worldwide.

# **SA NSC (Matric)**

The South African National Senior Certificate (NSC) is the certificate awarded to students upon successful completion of Grade 12 in South Africa. It represents the culmination of a student's secondary education and serves as a gateway to tertiary studies, professional development, and employment.

# Benefits

	American GED	IGCSE + AS Level	IB Diploma	SA NSC (Matric)
Flexibility	High	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Global Recognition	High	High	High	Moderate
Examination Cost	Medium	High	High	Low
Examination Availability	High	Medium	Medium	Low
Preparation Cost	Low	High	High	Medium
South African University Access	Only Colleges	All	All	All
International University Access	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Accessibility for Older Students	High	Medium	Low	Medium

# Benefits

	American GED	IGCSE + AS Level	IB Diploma	SA NSC (Matric)
Encourages Critical Thinking Skills	High	High	High	Moderate
Languages Required	1	2 for unconditional university exemption	2	2
Subjects Available	Low	High	High	High



# Features

	American GED	IGCSE + AS Level	IB Diploma	SA NSC (Matric)
Duration	Several months to 1 Year	2 - 3 Years (1 - 2 Years for IGCSE and 1 Year for AS Level)	2 Years	1 Year
Educational Prerequisites	None, however a general knowledge at the Grade 9 level is expected	IGCSE: Completion of Grade 9 or equivalent; AS Level: Completion of IGCSE	Completion of middle school	Completion of Grade 11
Age Requirements	17 or older	14 to 17	16 to 19	17 to 18
Preparation Cost	R2,900 to R24,000 per annum	R38,500 to R44,590 per annum	R45,000 to R138,000 per annum	R24,000 to R40,300 per annum

	American GED	IGCSE + AS Level	IB Diploma	SA NSC (Matric)
Examination Cost	\$80 per subject (About R6800 covers all 4 examinations)	IGCSE: Average of R2212 per subject AS Level: Average of R2362 per subject	\$119 per subject	No charge for DBE  R8080 covers 7 subjects for IEB
Examination Availability	All year-round	Twice a year (June and November)	May and November each year	Annually in October / November
University Access	Not accepted by SA universities. Accepted by SA private colleges and many international institutions	Widely accepted worldwide	Widely accepted worldwide	Accepted by South African universities and many international institutions

	American GED	IGCSE + AS Level	IB Diploma	SA NSC (Matric)
Number of Subjects	4 (Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies)	IGCSE: Typically 5 subjects AS Level: Typically 3-4 subjects	6 (3 at higher level, 3 at standard level) + TOK, CAS, and Extended Essay	7 (Including 2 languages, Maths or Maths Literacy, Life Orientation, and 3 electives)
Number of Examinations	4 (one for each subject)	IGCSE: 1-2 per subject AS Level: 1-2 per subject	6 subject exams + Extended Essay and TOK presentation and essay	7
Global Recognition	Recognized in over 90 countries around the world	Globally recognized	Globally recognized	Primarily recognized in South Africa, but also recognized by some international institutions

	American GED	IGCSE + AS Level	IB Diploma	SA NSC (Matric)
Critical Thinking Skills	High	High	High	Moderate
Continuous Assessment	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
Flexibility	High	Moderate	Low	Moderate
Depth vs Breadth	Breadth - covers a broad range of topics within each subject	Both - offers a deep understanding of fewer subjects	Both - requires study in six subjects, but also in-depth study for the extended essay	Both - requires several subjects, but also allows for specialization
Digital Assessment	Yes	No	No	No

	American GED	IGCSE + AS Level	IB Diploma	SA NSC (Matric)
Languages Required	1	2 for unconditional university exemption	2	2
Accessibility for Older Students	Highly accessible	Varies by school, generally accessible	Not commonly available for older students	Accessible through ABET for adults
Study Methods	Self-study, online classes, tutor-guided study	Classroom-based learning, private tutoring, online study options	Classroom-based learning	Classroom-based learning
Type of Student	Students seeking a flexible study option and adults seeking secondary education equivalent	International students, students looking for flexible, subject-specific qualifications	Students looking for comprehensive, holistic education, ready for rigorous academic challenges	Students in South Africa seeking secondary school completion