

Providing Quality and Access to the US Curriculum for International Students



In American international schools around the world, there is demand for high-quality, American-style educational programs that offer access to options that domestic students take for granted, such as Advanced Placement® (AP®) and certain elective courses. That demand comes not only from American expats but also from foreign students looking for alternatives to their local education systems.



Grades PreK-12,
250 students



Angela Arigoni-
Mesfioui, Principal



19 different countries represented |
Trilingual (French, Arabic, English)

Such demand gave rise to London Academy in the Bouskoura section of Casablanca, Morocco. It is a private school which serves 250 students hailing from 19 different nationalities with an emphasis in three different languages (French, Arabic, and English).

“We are serving a population of students that seek to escape the French and Moroccan systems,” said London Academy Principal Angela M. Arigoni-Mesfioui. “Students are finding those programs too rigid [and] stressful, and passing the multitude of exams to graduate causes anxiety, depression, and a sense of failure.”

London Academy has found it difficult to recruit qualified teachers for the full breadth of courses it wants to offer, especially AP courses. The school also needed to ensure that its programming meets rigorous accreditation standards recognized by American colleges and universities so that students could realize their postsecondary goals.

In many parts of the world, a high-quality, American-style education is desired by both parents and students to open doors to college and career options. London Academy in Casablanca, Morocco, serves students from 19 different nationalities in three different languages. Through its partnership with Edmentum, London Academy is able to provide students with access to AP® and elective courses that are hard to find outside the U.S., differentiating both instruction and the academy’s value proposition.

How They Did It:

London Academy administrators knew that online learning could be an effective solution to the challenges the school faced—but only with the right partner.

“We needed a program that would provide our students with qualified teachers, strong and rigorous content, and a diploma accredited by a recognized agency,” Ms. Arigoni-Mesfioui explained.

Partnering with Edmentum’s EdOptions [Academy](#) met and exceeded those requirements, and it has proven to be a strong fit.

The students of London Academy spend Mondays through Thursdays working through their EdOptions Academy courses with the help of the program’s qualified virtual teachers and the school’s own staff. Fridays are reserved for students to receive additional English-language instruction and to get any extra support they need in their virtual courses. This can take the form of open “virtual office hours” facilitated by EdOptions Academy teachers, in-person tutoring with school staff, or meetings with parents to create action plans for students who need to catch up. By engaging students’ complete academic support networks, London Academy can quickly identify struggling students and take steps to get them back on pace.

“The EdOptions [Academy] system allows students to feel in control of their learning,” said Ms. Arigoni-Mesfioui. “They are the ones choosing the electives they want and are interested in. In addition, the students like the fact that the platform is adaptive, and they can go at their own pace. Some accelerate, while others take their time and are paced by the teachers.”

Partnering with Edmentum has allowed London Academy to offer its students opportunities that can be found at few schools outside the U.S.

"The program allowed us to offer a range of courses that we couldn't provide because we are located internationally," Ms. Arigoni-Mesfioui reported. "It is difficult to find AP teachers and hire them for all the AP courses. Now, we have a full range of electives, honors courses, and AP courses."

The consultative, highly responsive approach that Edmentum and EdOptions Academy take has also been a difference-maker for the school. Every implementation is different, particularly an implementation with the unique goals and many intricacies of London Academy. Even across time zones and an ocean, London Academy's Edmentum representatives are in weekly contact with the school, working collaboratively to find answers to challenges that have arisen and to adjust the implementation as needed.

"The communication between the student, parents, London Academy Casablanca teachers, and the EdOptions Academy teachers is topnotch," said Ms. Arigoni-Mesfioui. "This high level of communication allows for strong partnerships to form and guarantees a high student success rate."

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Success:

In the past two school years, students at London Academy have accomplished something that most high schools aspire to—all students who applied to college were admitted to their first-choice schools, with acceptances to top-ranked schools in the U.S., the U.K., Canada, Morocco, China, Jordan, and Italy. Additionally, London Academy presented its Casablanca program at the International Congress for School Effectiveness and Improvement (ICSEI) Conference in Norway in 2019 and Morocco in 2020 to top researchers, policymakers, and practitioners looking to transform education.

"I think if we look at the data of students passing courses from last year to this year, we will find that our student success rate has increased," Ms. Arigoni-Mesfioui reported. "Right now, all students are graduating on time. We have yet to have a student not graduate on pace. We have several students that have earned trust and work on an honor system that are graduating one year earlier than expected."

The Future:

As one can expect, a school as unique as London Academy has come through its online learning experience with lessons to share.

"The advice I would give is to have a vision of how, what, when, and where you will run your program," said Ms. Arigoni-Mesfioui. "You need to hire teachers that believe in the program and share your vision."

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