

High school exchange in England, Dorset, A-Level

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GENERAL INFORMATION

The purpose of the High School Program is to provide opportunities for people of diverse cultures to come together to learn about different points of view and ways of life. Cross-cultural understanding is a fundamental step in promoting better friendship and world peace. Students also gain maturity, self confidence and develop intercultural skills.

As it is a selective program, we expect the highest standards of behavior from participants at all times and, in turn, assume responsibility for the welfare and safety of the student throughout the program. The student must be committed to comply with all reasonable rules of the host family; local coordinator and school during his/her stay abroad.

This way, the student benefits from a successful integration in the local community and makes lifelong friends and one in a lifetime experience!

- DESTINATION : Dorset, UK
 - AGE : 16 to 19
 - DATES : September to June
 - LENGTH : Term, Semester, Academic year



TRANSFER OF CREDITS AND TRANSCRIPTS OF GRADES

Please note that the student is not guaranteed:

- a placement at a certain grade level;
- that transferable credits will be granted;
- that a diploma will be awarded at the end of the academic program.

These decisions remain at the entire discretion of the national educational authorities of home and host countries. Nacel International is not responsible for the procedures and information required for this process.

Applicants must consider the possibility that they may have to repeat the corresponding grade in their home country upon return. Before departure, they must clearly understand the possibilities that exist to have their grades and school year abroad recognized in the school curriculum of their home country. They must also be clearly informed about the procedures involved. Your local representative can assist in these matters.

DESCRIPTION

The College is located in the Dorset, in the South of England, and international students will no doubt enjoy these seaside surroundings! It offers a friendly and stimulating environment with modern equipment and facilities and is experienced in welcoming and supporting international students. It started life as a grammar school before closing due to the war and returning as a teacher's training college up until the mid 60s. Since 1985 it has been a tertiary college for students. The college aims to provide key skills for industry in partnership with local universities Bournemouth University, Kingston University and Plymouth University.



Outdoor sports are easily practiced at the outdoor adventure centre belonging to the College! Weymouth is one of the most popular seaside resorts in southern England. It has theatre, cinema, restaurants and a high speed ferry link to France and the Channel Islands. Weymouth is a famous and historic town - it was the favourite holiday resort of King George III. The College is conveniently located within walking distance of the town centre, railway and bus station.

The College welcomes about 2500 students from across the region and is located on Dorset's Jurassic Coast, which is England's first natural heritage site, and was the venue for sailing events at the 2012 Olympics. It is only 2 ½ hours from London city center by train. Among those students, about 1200 are full-time aged 16–19, 700 are adults, mostly on access to higher education or part-time courses, and about 400 are apprentices.

The College offers academic courses such as the A-Level but also a good range of vocational courses (BTEC). After having completed their A-levels, students may be admitted to Universities such as University of Southampton, Nottingham University, Kings College London, Plymouth University, Oxford University, etc. In 2017, across the College, about 250 students applied to University with 96% of them receiving offers from universities across the UK. From the 2017 A-level students, 100% of students who applied were offered places at University. With 75% of those students who applied to the elite Russell Group universities receiving offers. The College is part of the University of Plymouth Colleges network. The College welcomes students from France, Spain, the Netherlands, Austria, Germany, Slovakia, Czech Republic, Denmark and Italy.



Sport facilities

The College outdoor adventure activities include sailing, kayaking, canoeing and climbing. The College is so close to the beach that students can go there with their packed lunch or jump into the water after class! It is also at walking distance to the city center. The campus has a sports hall, two fitness suites and outdoor pitches.

School facilities

The school offers excellent study facilities as well as a theatre, a restaurant, a Skills Center, a Media Centre as well as two sports centres. The school has a library with over 40,000 books and a learning centre with 200 computers. A-level students can hang out in the 6th Form common room, at the on-site Café or The Lounge.

The College also offers hair and beauty salons and an academy restaurant.

LOCATION

Weymouth, England.

SCHOOL SYSTEM

TYPE OF SCHOOLS

State supported Further Education College, established in 1985.

A LEVEL STUDIES AT THE COLLEGE

AS and A-Levels: Most students join the **AS program (Year 12) or the A-Level (Year 12 and 13)**. This is a Level 3 course. It is expected that students attend the public exam in May or June. The A-level course has a strong focus on academic success: the English level must be sufficient to achieve academic results. **The College has a 98% pass rate for international students for A-level exams. Last year, in 19 out of 21 subjects at A2 a 100% pass rate was also recorded.**

Each full-time student has a personal tutor who will monitor, track, action plan and build portfolios with him/her.

Classes are held **from 9am to 4.30pm from Monday to Friday.**

The A-level course is a two-year program that prepares students for university. In the UK, this is a traditional route young people take to gain entry to university and is a popular option for many international students too. The standard offer to date has been **3 AS levels** plus English support classes (up to a certain level, not offered each term), and 3 A-level classes the second year.

If students are not planning to go to university, it is also possible to attend just for one year (AS Level, only possible for EU students), at the end of which they will have achieved 3 AS levels. Note that AS scores are released mid August only.

The College staff provides weekly tutorials to support international students with their studies, as well as English support classes (up to a certain level, and not each term, not guaranteed) and University guidance.

Length

- AS – One Year
- A Level – Two Years

Study time at the College

The College course load is approximately 20/25 hours a week, depending on how many subjects are studied, students are also expected to have their own study time, say 30/35 hours in total. Individual attendance records will be closely monitored and learners will be expected to meet minimum level of attendance of 93%.

The College offers a wide range of AS level classes.

Students may attend:

- Combined Art Course (art, craft and design),
- Biology,



- Chemistry,
- English language,
- English literature,
- Geography,
- History,
- Law,
- Maths,
- Photography,
- Physics,
- Psychology,
- French
- Politics
- Media Studies.

Other options may be offered like A-level Extended Research project.

Books: The teachers, where possible, plan to provide the books or course information sheets where appropriate. However, some expenses are incurred and we estimate that GBP 25 - GBP 40 for books is adequate.

Exams: At the end of the AS Level school year, the student will not graduate but a Certificate will be awarded by the exam board for each subject successfully passed (as per current State rules). Exams taken for the first time (or under 19 years old students) are included in the price. Any exams taken a second time must be paid for by the student.

International exams like IELTS are taken in Bournemouth and can be up to £150. The English exams students must do at the College can be either the GCSE or Functional Skills course, both of which they would not have to pay for.

SHORT TERM BRITISH COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

The College may welcome international students for:

1. **one Term** (Fall, Spring or Summer Term)
2. **one Semester** = Spring Term + Summer Term

Please note: these short term experiences do not allow students to receive any grade report.

VOCATIONAL DIPLOMA BTEC AT THE COLLEGE

The College also offers a wide range of vocational diplomas at Level 3: these vocational diplomas called BTEC last 2 years and are the equivalent of 3 A-level courses, with a more practical focus. They are job related skills trainings. BTEC qualifications are undertaken in vocational subjects ranging from business studies to engineering and are equivalent to other qualifications such as the GCSE (levels 1 to 2), A Level (level 3) and university degrees (levels 4 to 7).

Successful completion of the course allows students to progress on to University in their study areas.

Why choose a vocational diploma?

- BTECs are work-related qualifications suitable for a wide range of students.
- They're built to accommodate the needs of employers and allow progression to university.
- They provide a practical, real-world approach to learning without sacrificing any of the essential subject theory.
- They're recognized by schools, colleges, universities, employers and professional bodies across the UK and in over 100 countries worldwide.
- BTECs come in different levels, from Entry Level (Foundation Learning) right through to professional qualifications at Level 7 (equivalent to postgraduate study).
- They also come in different sizes at each level. The smallest size is an Award, the next size is a Certificate and the

largest is a Diploma.

- The time taken to complete a BTEC depends on the size and level of the qualification, and also whether the qualification is studied full- or part-time.
- The number of units varies according to the design and focus of each qualification.
- Each BTEC program has a set number of guided learning hours.

On offer:

- **Applied Science:** Scientific Practical Techniques, Genetics and Genetic Engineering, Criminology, Criminal Psychology, and Forensic Psychology
- **Art and Design** (a portfolio of work is required for admission): Fine Art, Painting, Sculpture, Ceramics, Metalwork, Print, Plaster, Photography, 3D Design, Graphic Design and 4D Time-Based Media.
- **Business:** Business Environment, Management of Resources, Social Enterprise, Marketing and Communication.
- **Sports and Exercise:** Practical, Anatomy, Physiology, Psychology, Training, Coaching, Injuries, and Biomechanics.
- **Travel and Tourism:** customer service, business, marketing, destinations, travelling, and cabin crew.
- **Architecture and Civil Engineering**
- **Health and Social care**
- **Information Technology**
- **Public Services**

Specific requirements for BTEC (one or two years, credited):

- the equivalent of 5 GCSEs at C or above, including English and Maths; some subjects require a grade B or an overall B/C profile.
- an intermediate level of English. Score must be equivalent to IELTS 5.5.

Some specific requirements exist for specific BTEC courses (example: a portfolio for the BTEC Art and Design).

TERMS AND DATES

Course Start Date: early September

Course End Date: mid June (the end date will depend on exam dates)

The best time to arrive at College is 2 or 3 days at least before the course starts.

Half term holidays: usually late October to early November and mid to end of February (1 week).

Christmas holidays: usually late December to early January (2 weeks)

Easter holidays: usually late March to mid April (2 weeks).

ACCOMMODATION

Many international students like to live in the home of a local family. Students choosing a half board Homestay have a study-bedroom with a desk or table. Bed sheets are provided. They are given **breakfast and an evening meal on weekdays** and **full board on weekends**. Although many homes consist of a mother, father and children, the term "homestay" can also mean a widow, a single parent family or a retired couple whose children have left home or a single person. It is an opportunity to experience home life in England.

Most homes in England are modest in size with an average of 3 bedrooms. There is normally one bathroom in the house,

used by all those living there. Students can use it at reasonable times and leave it clean after use. Students can spend their time with the family on evenings, watching television or talking, or meeting up with friends and studying in their room.

A reasonable number of incoming telephone calls are allowed, but it is recommended that students buy or rent mobile phones to keep in touch with their family/friends. In some homestays it is permitted to make calls, providing the student asks first and all calls are paid for.

Some host families allow students to have their own telephone line in their room but in which case the student is responsible for paying all charges and connection to the Internet.

Laundry is also be included, but not always ironing.

People in Britain are generally very fond of animals and a large number of homes have pets.

Homestays are paid for **42 weeks of accommodation and board (including Christmas and Easter holidays)**. Any additional week must be paid directly to the host family. Unused weeks are not refunded. Students are expected to stay the whole year in their homestay. Any homestay issues must first be discussed with the Homestay Provider.

A specific application form must be filled out.

POCKET MONEY

The student should have GBP 35 to GBP 40 per week for personal expenses and entertainment.

HOLIDAYS AND PARENT VISITS

Parents occasionally visit their children who are studying at the College, but not that often. Mostly students return home during longer holidays such as Christmas and Easter to visit.

We recommended that parents keep their visits to a minimum; part of the education of living and studying in a different country, is to adjust to being away from home/parents and managing on your own. Students should make new friends whilst studying and be immersed in a different culture.

ARRIVAL & ORIENTATION

ORIENTATION

International students are offered an orientation session on arrival by the College academic staff.

ARRIVAL

Airport pick and up and transfers are not included. The local train station situated in the Weymouth town centre operates a direct service to the major cities of Bristol (2 hours and 20 minutes) and London (2 hours and 30 minutes).

The nearest international airport is in Bournemouth, which is 39 miles away and takes an hour by train or car. There are also airports at Exeter, Bath, Southampton, Gatwick, and Heathrow.

Group transfers may be arranged if several students arrive at around the same time and at the same airport.

LOCAL COORDINATOR

The international administrator will help, support and advise the student with all matters throughout the stay, whenever required. She can be met at the international office of the College.

The student will receive regular written report from all teachers (twice a year). AS and A-level results are released mid August.

REQUIREMENTS

Students must be interviewed in their home country before being accepted.

Specific requirements for AS-Level and BTEC (one or two years, credited):

- the equivalent of 5 GCSEs at C or above, including English and Maths; some subjects require a grade B or an overall B/C profile.
- an intermediate level of English (equivalent to B1): students are required to fill out an English test provided together with the application form

Some specific requirements exist for specific BTEC courses.

AGE

Students must be 16 to 19 on arrival. Please note that students must turn 16 before August 31st.

Please note that the College does not require students under the age of 18 to have a legal guardian in the UK.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

Please request the specific application form and the English test.

APPLICATION DEADLINE: April 15th for arrival in September. Late applications may be accepted, depending on availability. Short term programs: please inquire.

1) Your application pack should include the following:

- Application form
- Student photo
- English teacher's reference letter
- School report/grades from the last 3 years, translated in English
- Accommodation application
- English test
- Photocopy of the student's passport or ID card.

2) We will assess the application and issue the Acceptance Letter and invoice you a non-refundable deposit.

3) We will contact you to confirm the accommodation arrangements.

4) As soon as you have arranged flights to the UK please let us know the airport, date and time of arrival together with the flight number.

5) Remaining fees must be paid at least **8 weeks before arrival in the UK.**

6) Students must acquire travel and medical insurance valid for the UK, **including Personal Liability and repatriation costs.**

STUDENT VISA:

If you have questions regarding immigrations rules for European and international students, these can be found on the UKCOSA website under Guidance Notes for Students: www.ukcosa.org.uk

Other Internet sites: www.ukvisas.gov.uk ; www.fco.gov.uk

The College is an A rated license sponsor.

Short term programs (less than 6 months): Visitor or short term visa up to 6 months.

Long term programs (one academic year): All students must first take the English test included in the application package. If positive, they will have to provide an approved English test visa purposes (Student Route). They will need to prove a B1 English level. They also need to prove financial resources for £1,023 per month (for up to 9 months).

Here are the details: <https://www.gov.uk/student-visa>

IMPORTANT: the Academic IELTS test required is called "UKVI approved Academic IELTS".

We must receive the tuition deposit before we issue the CAS so it is important that this is paid as soon as possible to give the student enough time to receive the CAS and apply for a student visa. The student should check the visa carefully when he/she receives it to make sure it is correct as it is difficult to correct mistakes after he/she has arrived in the UK. The College's International Office will help the student extend his/her visa if required. The visa offices get very busy before the start of the academic year and it could take several weeks to obtain the visa.

CANCELLATION POLICY

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All cancellation requests must be signed and sent to NACEL INTERNATIONAL. The date of postmark, or e-mail reception will be considered the valid date of cancellation.

College Tuition:

A **non-returnable 10% deposit** is required before a **Confirmation of Acceptance for Study (CAS)** will be issued. This 10% is non-refundable.

Refund and cancellation in line with all students of the College.

- All 10% deposits are non-returnable to cover all aspects of administration before a student arrives or cancels;
- If you do not complete your course, you will still be liable to pay part or all of your tuition fees.
- All fee refunds will be given to international students within the first 4 weeks of their course minus the non-refundable 10% deposit.
- After 4 weeks, a refund will only be granted on extenuating personal circumstances after evidence has been given to the college.
- A personal application must be made to the Principal who will consider the application on a case by case basis.
- The refund will be calculated on a full term basis.
- If a student is refused a visa, any fees paid above the 10% non-refundable deposit will be paid in full.
- There will be no refund if a student decides to change colleges as this is breaking the Student Route rules.
- There will be a charge if a visa is not obtained and it is deemed the student's own fault (i.e. not submitting the correct paperwork after being told what to submit).

Homestay Fees:

- For cancellations more than 28 days prior to arrival, the homestay provider will refund 100% of the fees paid for the learner.
- For cancellations 28 days – 8 days before arrival, the homestay provider will retain 50% of the fees paid for the learner.
- For cancellations 7 days or less prior to arrival, or non-appearance, the homestay provider will retain 100% of the fees paid for the learner.
- No refund after arrival.

The logo for COOLAGENT, featuring the word "COOL" in blue and "AGENT" in white, both in a bold, sans-serif font, set against an orange rectangular background.

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