



المدرسة العالمية الأمريكية
UNIVERSAL AMERICAN SCHOOL

Al-Furqan Education Foundation

VISION

FOREVER DRIVEN BY KNOWLEDGE,
INSPIRED BY SUCCESS

MISSION

TO NURTURE AN INTERNATIONALLY
MINDED COMMUNITY OF INTEGRITY
AND ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE

VALUES

RESPECT, INTEGRITY,
COLLABORATION, EXCELLENCE

LEARNING AND TEACHING POLICY

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RATIONALE

Learning and teaching are at the center of our work at Universal American School. We are committed to maintaining a rigorous and continuous drive to be inclusive, accelerate learning and develop personalized education for all our learners. Our goal is to inspire our students to be engaged, reflective, inquisitive, and have the confidence and courage to exceed expectations. We challenge and prepare our learners for a successful future.

PURPOSE

- To provide high-quality education that maximizes progress and challenges our students to be the best they can be.
- To establish clear expectations for learning and teaching.
- To promote a consistent and coherent approach to learning and teaching across the school.
- To promote a wider community understanding of learning and teaching.
- To define the UAS Lesson Fundamentals as the core instructional practices expected across the school, ensuring consistency, quality, and continuous improvement in learning and teaching.

TEACHING FOR EFFECTIVE LEARNING

To make accelerated progress, personalized learning is at the heart of effective learning and teaching at UAS. Our learners are motivated through the IB Learner Profile attributes and IB Approaches to Learning to become independent learners and thinkers. They make connections across all areas of learning, thinking critically, and solving complex problems while taking risks and **learning** from their mistakes. Our community works together to ensure students reach and exceed their individual goals as well as making learners more culturally and globally aware that they are ready for success on whichever path they choose for their future.

The principles of this policy apply across in-person and distance learning contexts. In all settings, UAS remains committed to continuity of learning, inclusion, student wellbeing, and high-quality teaching.

We recognize the need to develop strategies that will allow all students to learn in ways that best suit them so that they will fulfill their potential. Many learning opportunities are made available to our students taking different learning styles into consideration. These include:

- Inquiring and problem solving
- Research
- Independent, Pair & Group work
- Asking and Answering Questions

- Use of ICT throughout the curriculum
- Field Trips & Outdoor Learning
- Creative & Design Tasks
- Debates, role-play, and Presentations
- Participation in Athletics & Physical Activities

We encourage students to take responsibility for their own learning and engage in higher levels of metacognition/metacognitive strategies. This will help them throughout their lives by developing their resilience, self-awareness, reasoning, and problem-solving abilities.

Effective learning and teaching is characterized by the following features:

1. Quality learning and teaching
2. The UAS Lesson Fundamentals
3. Goal setting and tracking
4. Assessment
5. **Personalization and Intervention**
6. Inclusivity
7. The learning environment
8. Curriculum organization
9. Digital technology
10. The extended curriculum

1. Quality Learning and teaching

This is characterized by:

- Highly focused lessons with clear learning intentions, success criteria, and alignment to adopted standards
- Consistently high expectations for student participation, thinking, and engagement
- Student-centered learning experiences that balance modelling, guided practice, discussion, and independent application
- Purposeful questioning that deepens thinking and promotes accountability
- Regular checking for understanding to inform teaching and address misconceptions
- Feedback that helps students understand how to improve and supports visible progress over time
- Structured opportunities for purposeful talk, collaboration, and the development of academic language
- Differentiation and personalization to support access, challenge, and progress for all learners
- A gradual release towards student independence, enabling students to take increasing ownership of their learning

- Praise, encouragement, and positive relationships that motivate students and support a strong culture for learning

2. UAS Lesson Fundamentals

At Universal American School, high-quality teaching is underpinned by the UAS Lesson Fundamentals. **These fundamentals establish the core expectations for teaching and learning in every classroom, in every lesson, every day.** They provide a consistent framework for strong practice while allowing teachers to apply professional judgment in ways that are developmentally appropriate and responsive to subject, phase, and student need.

The UAS Lesson Fundamentals are designed to ensure that learning is clear, challenging, inclusive, and progressive. They support a shared understanding of what effective teaching looks like at UAS and help ensure that all students experience high-quality learning opportunities across the school.

UAS Lesson Fundamentals can be found in **Appendix A** and are summarized as follows:

1. **Clarity of Learning**
Learning intentions and success criteria are clear, visible, and aligned to standards. Students understand what they are learning, why it matters, and what success looks like.
2. **Questioning for Thinking**
Teachers use purposeful questioning to deepen thinking, check understanding, extend responses, and promote participation from all students.
3. **Student Independence**
Lessons are structured to move learning from teacher guidance towards increasing student independence. Students are expected to think, apply, problem-solve, and take increasing ownership of their learning.
4. **Feedback that Causes Thinking**
Feedback is timely, specific, and focused on improvement. Students are expected to reflect on feedback, respond to it, and use it to strengthen their work over time.
5. **Checking for Understanding**
Teachers use ongoing formative assessment throughout lessons to identify misconceptions, adapt teaching, and ensure students are making progress.
6. **Talk Routines**
Structured opportunities for purposeful talk are embedded within learning. Students are supported to explain, justify, discuss, and build on ideas using appropriate academic language.

These fundamentals apply across all phases and subjects and should be evident in both in-person and distance learning contexts. They are reflected through planning, classroom practice, assessment, student dialogue, and the overall learning environment.

The UAS Lesson Fundamentals are not intended to create a rigid formula for lessons. Rather, they establish a common language and a shared set of expectations that support consistency, quality, and continuous improvement in learning and teaching across the school.

3. Goal setting and tracking

- Individual students' progress is tracked. Strengths and areas for development are identified to inform planning and to implement intervention programs as appropriate.
- Summative data is collected and discussed formally with the faculty in student progress meetings. Formative data is ongoing and regularly discussed in department or grade level meetings.
- Student progress meetings are held to identify strengths or weaknesses in performance and/or identify PD requirements.
- Student voice is central to goal setting, action planning, and monitoring progress towards goals.
- Parents/guardians receive regular updates on their child's progress. Goals are shared so that parents/guardians can provide additional support at home.
- Student progress is monitored through data collection and focused lesson observations.

4. Assessment

Secure knowledge of each student's current progress is a core element of learning and teaching at UAS. Lesson planning is based on prior learning, knowledge of students' interests and needs and the adopted standards for learning (New York State Standards). Throughout the learning process, active assessment is required to ensure that the expected rate of progress is being made.

Fundamental to our formative assessment procedures is Assessment for Learning (AfL) and a range of AfL strategies are used in the classroom:

- Learning objectives are made explicit and shared with the students.
- Success criteria are agreed by the student and teacher.
- Self and peer assessment is used against the success criteria.
- Students are engaged in their learning and receive written and/or oral feedback on their progress.
- Students respond to feedback from teachers and peers.

Assessment at UAS is closely connected to the UAS Lesson Fundamentals, particularly checking for understanding and feedback that causes thinking. These approaches help teachers adapt teaching in real time and help students reflect, respond, and improve their work.

5. Personalization and Intervention

- It is expected all students at UAS will make expected progress through class-based teaching. However, some students may benefit from additional small group or 1:1 intervention programs to enable them to make the progress required to achieve their full potential.
- More able learners are supported through quality teaching as well as opportunities to take part in activities outside normal lessons.
- Some children will be identified for intervention or extension groups, delivered by a teacher during the class day or through recommended co-curricular activities.

6. Inclusivity

- We are a fully inclusive school. Support for all groups of learners is always planned to enable all students to maximize their learning.
- We include topics that are relevant and engaging to our students, aiming to have a culturally responsive curriculum with equitable learning opportunities for all students.

7. The Learning Environment

- The learning environment should visibly support the UAS Lesson Fundamentals through clear routines, access to resources, purposeful opportunities for talk, and a classroom culture in which students feel safe to think, participate, and improve.
- The classroom environment sets the climate for learning, and an engaging classroom promotes independent use of resources and high-quality work by the children.
- UAS provides a safe, inclusive, and stimulating indoor and outdoor learning environment in which all areas are purposefully used to promote student development, learning, and achievement.

8. Curriculum Organization

The UAS curriculum inspires and challenges all learners and prepares them for the future. UAS develops a coherent curriculum that builds on young people's experiences across all divisions and that helps all young people to become successful learners, confident individuals, and responsible citizens. Specifically, the curriculum helps young people to:

- Achieve high standards and make very good/outstanding progress.
- Enable those not achieving grade-level expectations to make significant progress and narrow the gap.
- Lead to qualifications that are worthy of entry to higher education and future employment.

- Fulfill local, national, and accreditation requirements.
- Enable students to fulfill their potential.
- Meet the needs of young people of all abilities at UAS.

9. Digital Technology and Artificial Intelligence

At UAS, we believe the purposeful use of high-quality digital technologies enhances learning and teaching.

Teachers are expected to incorporate technology where it is appropriate, where it strengthens the learning experience, and where it has a positive impact on student progress.

As artificial intelligence becomes an increasingly important part of education, students should be guided to use AI ethically, responsibly, and critically, with academic integrity, independent thinking, and human judgment remaining at the center of the learning process.

10. The Extended Curriculum

Helping students discover and/or develop new interests is essential to personalized learning at UAS. During the school year, a range of activities are organized to enhance the curriculum including:

- special events
- trips
- visitors
- clubs
- a robust after-school activities program
- Week Without Walls program



APPENDIX A



المدرسة العالمية الأمريكية
UNIVERSAL AMERICAN SCHOOL
FESTIVAL CITY

UAS LESSON FUNDAMENTALS

Every Classroom | Every Lesson | Every Day



CLARITY OF LEARNING

(Clear Learning Intentions & Success Criteria)

- Learning intentions are visible and referenced.
- Success criteria clarify what quality looks like and how to improve.
- Students can explain what they are learning.
- Links to standards are explicit.



QUESTIONING FOR THINKING

(Using purposeful questioning to deepen thinking)

- Questions are designed to deepen thinking, not just check recall.
- All students are expected and supported to think and respond.
- Questioning builds understanding, challenges ideas, and extends learning.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to ensure participation and accountability.



STUDENT INDEPENDENCE

(I-We-You Release)

- Gradual release from modelling → guided → independent.
- Students do the cognitive work.
- Scaffolded practice builds confidence.
- Tasks promote application and reasoning.



FEEDBACK THAT CAUSES THINKING

(WWW/EBI + student action)

- Feedback is timely and aligned to success criteria.
- Students act on feedback to improve their work.
- Improvement is visible over time.



CHECKING FOR UNDERSTANDING (CFU)

- CFUs occur throughout the lesson.
- Teachers use a range of strategies to check understanding.
- Teaching adapts based on evidence.
- Misconceptions are identified and addressed.



TALK ROUTINES

(Structured opportunities for purposeful talk)

- Talk is used to develop and refine thinking.
- Structures support all students to participate meaningfully.
- Academic language is modelled and expected.
- Students listen, respond, and build on each other's ideas.

UAS Lesson Expectations

- Aligned to standards
- High cognitive demand
- Inclusive & purposeful routines

What Great Lessons Look Like

- Thinking is visible
- Students are active & independent
- Feedback moves learning forward

Every Student making Progress

- Every child participates
- Every child thinks
- Every child knows what they are learning and how to improve



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