

High School Graduation Requirements and Track Options



1. High School Academic Program

Mercy Ships Academy offers a four-year High School Core Curriculum Program offering a total 28 course credits. A minimum of 26 credits is required to successfully graduate from our school. We recognize that our students come from many different counties so in 2009 we introduced the High School Tracks. These give students the flexibility to choose electives and/or substitute courses to meet the entrance requirements for colleges and universities in their home countries.

2. High School Tracks Explained

The four tracks run parallel and have a common core curriculum but allow for flexibility and the incorporation of home country courses and requirements. These would be taught through accredited online schools or correspondence schools. Guidelines would need to be established to qualify these courses, for accountability and authenticity, and are subject to Educational Board approval. (See 5.4 Guidelines for Alternative High School Courses in MSA Handbook, and section 4 - 6 of this document)

The tracks are as follows:

a. Core Curriculum (Track Option 1)

This track would form the core of the curriculum that we would offer and is the focus of our curriculum development. We would guarantee that Academy Staff would present all the courses within this track, with the exception of the elective courses. We would like students to complete a minimum of **one** online course within their High School career to equip them for lifelong learning.

All courses offered in the Core Curriculum Track, including the 2 full credits of student choice electives and 1 credit of online Science, are paid for by MSA. Students may substitute alternative online courses from other accredited schools, but any costs that exceed the cost of a basic Sevenstar Academy course will be the parent's responsibility.

b. United States and University Bound Students (Track Option 2)

This track includes the majority of the core curriculum courses but also ensures that the students meet the specific requirements recommended by US based colleges and universities, such as Government, Economics, Speech and Health Courses. We partner with Sevenstar Academy (online Christian School) offering any courses that teaching staff could not. (www.sevenstaracademy.org)

All courses offered in the Core Curriculum Track, including the 2 full credits of student choice electives and 1 credit of online Science, are paid for by MSA. Students may substitute alternative online courses from other accredited schools, but any costs that exceed the cost of a basic Sevenstar Academy course will be the parent's responsibility.

c. United Kingdom and European University Bound Students (Track Option 3)

This track includes the majority of the core curriculum courses but also ensures that the students meet the specific requirements recommended by UK and European based colleges and universities. It allows students to take a minimum of 2, but 3 – 4 are recommended, Advanced Placement (AP) Courses within a minimum of two subject areas (English, Math, Science and Social Studies). We partner with Sevenstar Academy to offer the AP Level Courses and for any other courses that teaching staff would not be able to offer. Please see section No. 5. for more details about AP Course selection and options.

All courses offered in the Core Curriculum Track, including the 2 full credits of student choice electives and 1 credit of online Science, are paid for by MSA. Students may substitute alternative online courses from other accredited schools, but any costs that exceed the cost of a basic Sevenstar Academy course will be the parent's responsibility.

d. Elective Based/Apprenticeship Track (Track Option 4)

We need to understand and make allowance for students that will not necessarily be college or university bound but would like to graduate with meaningful knowledge and skills that will allow them to join the work force. This can be achieved by meeting the basic graduation requirements, similar to that of the Mercy Ships Academy Core Curriculum but allowing for greater choice in electives and even the opportunity to participate in an on-board Apprenticeship Program.

Three apprenticeships have been designed with departmental approval in 2010. These are *Transportation Service Technician*, *Media Technology Mentoring*, and *Administrative Procedures Apprenticeship*. If students would like to pursue other possible apprenticeships during their Grade 11 and 12 year, please let the Academy Principal know, at least 6 months prior to the start of Grade 11 as specific department participation and approval will need to be explored. Mercy Ships Academy cannot guarantee that the desired apprenticeship program will be available, but we will explore every option and endeavor to make this option available to our students.

In order for MSA to offer a successful apprenticeship we need to have the support and availability of a qualified mentor for the student to work alongside, in the subject area being studied. Availability cannot be guaranteed and therefore, in some seasons we will not be able to offer an apprenticeship to a student.

It is important to note that if students graduate from the Mercy Ships Academy using the Electives Based/ Apprenticeship Track, this would not necessarily qualify a student to apply to university as the subject selected for electives may not meet academic requirements of the colleges and universities. It is essential that students and parents understand this prior to making this decision.

e. High School Track Options Comparison

The MSA Core Curriculum defines the courses that will be offered by MSA teachers, with the exception of electives which will be offered by Sevenstar Academy, online accredited schools.

<i>Tracks</i>	<i>MSA Core Curriculum</i>		<i>US College and University</i>		<i>UK and European University</i>		<i>Elective Based</i>	
Bible	0.5	Old Testament Survey: Journey with God	0.5	Old Testament Survey: Journey with God	0.5	Old Testament Survey: Journey with God	0.5	Old Testament Survey: Journey with God
	0.5	Timeless Truth	0.5	Timeless Truth	0.5	Timeless Truth	0.5	Timeless Truth
	0.5	New Testament Survey: Connecting with God	0.5	New Testament Survey: Connecting with God	0.5	New Testament Survey: Connecting with God	0.5	New Testament Survey: Connecting with God
	0.5	Life Shaping Decisions	0.5	Life Shaping Decisions	0.5	Life Shaping Decisions	0.5	Life Shaping Decisions
	1	Understanding the Times	1	Understanding the Times	1	Understanding the Times	1	Understanding the Times
	1	Missio Dei	1	Missio Dei	1	Missio Dei	1	Missio Dei
English	1	Fundamentals of Literature I	1	Fundamentals of Literature I	1	Fundamentals of Literature I	1	Fundamentals of Literature I
	1	Fundamentals of Literature II	1	Fundamentals of Literature II	1	Fundamentals of Literature II	1	Fundamentals of Literature II
	1	Advanced Literature and Writing I	1	Advanced Literature and Writing I	1	Advanced Literature and Writing I	1	Advanced Literature and Writing I

	1	Advanced Literature and Writing II	1	Advanced Literature and Writing II	1	Advanced Literature and Writing II #	1	Advanced Literature and Writing II
Mathematics	1	Algebra I (Completed in Grade 8)	1	Algebra I (Completed in Grade 8)	1	Algebra I (Completed in Grade 8)	1	Algebra I (Completed in Grade 8)
<p><i>All students are required to take a minimum of 4 Credits, with Algebra I, Geometry and Algebra II as compulsory courses.</i></p> <p><i>There is the potential to earn 5 credits for Mathematics.</i></p>	1	Geometry	1	Geometry	1	Geometry	1	Geometry
	1	Algebra II	1	Algebra II	1	Algebra II	1	Algebra II
	1	Pre - Calculus	1	Pre - Calculus/Online Alternative	1	Pre - Calculus/Online Alternative #	1	Pre - Calculus/Online Alternative
	1	Calculus	1	Calculus/Online Alternative	1	Calculus/Online Alternative #		
Science	1	Biology	1	Biology	1	Biology #	1	Biology
<p><i>All students are required to take Biology, Physics and Chemistry.</i></p>	1	Physics	1	Physics	1	Physics #	1	Physics
	1	Chemistry	1	Chemistry	1	Chemistry #	1	Chemistry
	1	On Line Science Option	1	On Line Science Option	1	On Line Science Option #		
Social Studies	1	Advanced World Geography	1	Advanced World Geography	1	Advanced World Geography	1	Advanced World Geography
<p><i>Students pursuing the Elective Track only need to complete 3 of 4 credit options.</i></p>	1	Advanced Ancient History	1	Advanced Ancient History	1	Advanced Ancient History	1	Advanced Ancient History
	1	Modern World History	1	Modern World History	1	Modern World History #	1	Modern World History OR
	0.5	Economics	0.5	Economics	0.5	Economics #	0.5	Economics
	0.5	Comparative Government	0.5	Comparative Government	0.5	Comparative Government #	0.5	Comparative Government
French	0.5	French HS 1 A	0.5	French HS 1 A	0.5	French HS 1 A		
	0.5	French HS 1 B	0.5	French HS 1 B	0.5	French HS 1 B		

<i>0.5 Credits per school year from Grade 9 to 12.</i>	0.5	Student's Choice/Study Hall *	0.5	Student's Choice *	0.5	Student's Choice/Study Hall *	1	Student's Choice *
	0.5	Student's Choice/Study Hall *	0.5	Student's Choice *	0.5	Student's Choice/Study Hall *	1	Student's Choice *
	0.5	Student's Choice/Study Hall *	0.5	Student's Choice *	0.5	Student's Choice/Study Hall *	1	Student's Choice *
							0.5	Student's Choice *
TOTAL CREDITS	28		28		28		27	
Other Requirements/ Recommendations				Please check with universities to see if there are any required courses. This varies greatly.	2 - 4	Possible AP Course Substitution #		
<i>* Student can substitute Study Hall's for up to 2 Full Credits of Electives, but this will forfeit the academic credit.</i>								

f. Summary of Credits Needed to Graduate by High School Track Choice

Subject Area	<i>MSA Core Curriculum</i>	<i>US College and University</i>	<i>UK and European University</i>	<i>Elective Based</i>
Bible	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>
English	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>
Mathematics	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>
Science	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>
Social Studies	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>3 Full Credits</i>	<i>4 Full Credits</i>	<i>3 Full Credits</i>
French (Foreign Language)	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	
Physical Education	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>

Information Technology	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>	<i>2 Full Credits</i>
Electives	<i>2 Full Credits *</i>	<i>3 Full Credits *</i>	<i>2 Full Credits *</i>	<i>6 Full Credits *</i>
TOTAL	28 FULL CREDITS	28 FULL CREDITS	28 FULL CREDITS	28 FULL CREDITS
<i>MIN. of 26 Full Credits earned over four years needed to graduate.</i>				
<i>There is no credit MAXIMUM for students to earn, but there is only 28 Full Credits of class time during the school schedule, students can complete additional credits after school and during the summer.</i>				
<i>* Student can substitute Study Hall's for up to 2 Full Credits of Electives, but this will forfeit the academic credit.</i>				

5. Advanced Placement (AP) Course Options

Advanced Placement Courses are courses designed for students that want to experience academic reach and are aiming to attend advanced Universities in the United States. For students wanting to attend a university in Europe or the UK, it's essential to complete a minimum of 2, but recommended 3 – 4, AP level courses to qualify for university acceptance. It is best to confirm the exact number of AP Level Courses required with your desired university.

Advanced Placement Courses are of a much higher academic standard and require students to be self-motivated and determined to persevere through a large amount of course content and assignments. Not all students are suited for AP level courses and this needs to be considered when making a decision.

MSA is not able to offer these courses within our academic program, but students can complete AP level courses through Sevenstar Academy. Sevenstar Academy provides the online course and instructor, parents are responsible to purchase any additional resources and supplies, and MSA provides the time in the timetable and time management support, and when possible, helps coordinate a subject matter tutor.

6. Elective Options through Other Accredited Online Schools

Mercy Ships Academy desires to offer our students elective options that meet their educational needs and personal interests. These are offered as online courses through either Sevenstar Academy or Alpha Omega Academy.

We have intentionally integrated online learning into our academic program and graduation requirements as we believe that this will become an essential tool for learning in the future. By creating opportunities for our students to complete online courses, while being supported by MSA staff, we equip them for future online learning opportunities.

It is important to recognize that online learning requires a different academic approach, a higher level of self-motivation and well-developed organizational skills. It is for this reason that we promote the opportunity for students to participate in a minimum of two full credits of online learning within the four years of high school. Students do have the opportunity to substitute the core curriculum courses with additional online courses, but we do ask families to consider what is a manageable online course load for their student.

At times when we have not been able to recruit a High School Specialist Teacher, we need to use online courses to cover the instructional gaps. (In these cases, all costs are covered by Mercy Ships.) We have experienced a challenge with this when students have been required to take more than two or three courses. Each online course requires about an hour of online computer time per day and not all students have the focus or motivation to do this well.

a. Online School Partnerships

As a school we have established partnerships with two online accredited schools: Sevenstar Academy and Alpha Omega Academy. Please take a look at the [Online Classes](#) page for course options and additional information.

b. Understanding the Costs to the Family

The Mercy Ships Academy is responsible for the costs of 2 full electives credits (0.5 credits for each year of High School) and 1 full Science Credit as part of our High School Graduation Requirements and Core Curriculum.

For the Elective/Apprenticeship Track the family will be responsible for any and all additional online courses selected. This has the potential to cost an additional \$2,000 to \$3,000 throughout the four years of High School.

7. Dual Credit High School College Courses

At this stage MSA does not offer any dual credit courses, but this is something we would like to explore in the future. Families can explore Course Substitutions through online school, but there will be a financial cost to the family.

8. Understanding Transferred Credits at the High School Level

- Transfer students must submit an Official Transcript from their former school and a letter from the Principal outlining their Board of Education Requirements for Graduation from High School.
- Where possible Mercy Ships Academy will provide the necessary courses to complete the requirements needed or substitute other courses.
- If a failing grade is obtained by a transfer student who would still qualify for graduation without the course in his home school, a failing grade will not be recorded on the official transcript.
- All students must take the full course allotment scheduled for their Grade each year unless the Principal* grants special permission.

- Mercy Ships Academy graduation diplomas will be awarded only to students who satisfactorily fulfill our requirements as listed above.

9. Guidelines for Alternative High School Courses (Course Substitution)

All courses would need to be offer by an accredited online or correspondence school, recognized either internationally or within the student's home country.

The following information would need to be submitted to the Educational Board for approval via the Academy Principal*, prior to the start of the academic year:

1. Proof of registration, which falls within the proposed academic year.
2. A course description for the chosen school.
3. Detailed curriculum of the course which includes methods of assessment and recommended instructional hours.
4. A guarantee that the Mercy Ships Academy would receive quarterly feedback on the student's progress.
5. Contact details of the Principal of the school, so that the Academy Principal can correspond, when needed.

Each course would need to meet the following criteria:

- From an accredited online or correspondence school.
- Presented at a high school level.
- For a course to be considered a full credit - 120 instructional hours would need to be recommended and 60 instructional hours for a half credit course.
- Regular evaluation would need to be administered that would provide feedback to the student and the Academy.

The Mercy Ships Academy would be able to provide the following:

1. A Mentor Teacher who will manage the course administration and assist the student with their areas of difficulty, where possible.
2. Time within the school timetable.
3. Access to computers for online learning during the school day.
4. Basic stationery supplies.

The Student's family would be responsible for supplying:

1. Researching and deciding on the courses they would like their children to take.
2. Home Language instruction.
3. All costs of involved in the course, including course fees, exam fees, textbook and other resources, and any mailing.

Once all the information has been submitted to the Academy Principal*, it will be presented to the Mercy Ships Academy Educational Board for final approval.

10. Changes to the Mathematics Course Potions, starting August 2015

All students enrolled in Grade 8 starting in August 2015 will be completing Algebra I as part of their Junior High Mathematics Courses. This will be transferred credit into High School, but more importantly allows students to select advanced Math courses in Grade 11 and 12. This is aimed at giving our students more options for High School Course Selection.

The Mercy Ships Academy Core Curriculum Math Courses for Grade 6 to 12, since August 2015 are the following:

Grade	Mathematics Core Curriculum Course Titles	High School Credit
6	Mathematics Grade 6	
7	Pre-Algebra	
8	Algebra I	1
9	Geometry	1
10	Algebra II	1
11	Pre-Calculus	1
12	Calculus (Optional Course)	1

Mercy Ships Academy Students need a minimum of 4 Mathematics Credits but have the potential of earning 5 Mathematics credits. Enrolling in a Mathematics Course in Grade 12 is optional.

Students also have the option of substituting alternative Mathematics courses offered through our online partners. Please see the Course Substitution Policy and note that all course substitutions costs are the family's responsibility.

11. 'Test for Credit'

The Mercy Ships Academy does not accept 'Test for Credit'. If a student completed the Advanced Placement Exam and scores a passing grade, we do not recognize that as a student's completing the AP Course. Some Universities and Colleges will view a passing grade on the AP Exam as credit, but families will need to explore that with the specific college or university during the application process.