

# Estero High School Cambridge/AICE Program Frequently Asked Questions



## ***What are the primary differences between AICE, IB, and AP?***

The reality is that all three programs are going to prepare your son or daughter for the rigors of college coursework, while offering them the opportunity to earn college credit (saving time and money) before stepping on campus. Both AICE and IB include a full curriculum that encourages students to matriculate through a variety of courses/syllabi in order to obtain a program diploma. AICE offers a level of flexibility not available in some other programs when students are registering for classes.

## ***Why should my child take AICE classes?***

Colleges want to see that a student is taking the highest level classes that a high school has to offer. This way they know that the student has a better chance of success when they begin college.

## ***What courses are Cambridge/AICE students exempt from?***

If a student continues on the path towards the AICE Diploma and is at minimum an AICE Curriculum Competitor, they are exempt from HOPE and the online course requirement. The AICE Diploma is recognized by the State of Florida as a high school diploma. Colleges still want to see a student take the normal high school requirements, so they have a well-rounded background.

## ***What are the testing windows for AICE exams?***

AICE exams are given on exact dates with times that vary by time zone. A student must be under Centre Supervision at a specified time (taking the exam at a specific time with a proctor at EHS). Estero High School is Zone 2, so during daylight savings time, our key times are 9:00am and 1:00pm. For example, I can have a 2 hour morning exam from 7:30 - 9:30 since that assures they are testing with a proctor at 9:00am. I will try my best to always schedule exams so they finish testing before the buses leave (except for early dismissal days). Early dismissal days students will need to have a ride home. There are some exams that take place after the school year ends. The schedules can be found on the school website (<https://est.leeschools.net/>).

## ***Do ALL colleges accept AICE credits?***

More than 600 colleges and universities nationwide accept AICE credits, including the Ivy and Ivy Plus institutions as well as the majority of Florida universities. Of course, some schools, especially private schools, will pick and choose which credits they accept.

For a searchable database on college recognition, follow the link below:  
[cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search/](https://cambridgeinternational.org/recognition-search/)

## ***Are AICE and Cambridge the same thing?***

Yes! AICE stands for Advanced International Certificate of Education. Cambridge is the program and AICE is the name given to the exams and diploma.

## ***What is the difference between an AS Level course and an A Level course?***

This is a common question - most colleges and universities both nationally and globally refer to the Cambridge AICE Program as AS and A Levels.

An AS Level course is designed to be one year of study culminating with the examination in May/June and will earn one credit toward the AICE Diploma.

An A Level course is designed to be the second of two years of study. The A Level exam earns a second credit toward the AICE Diploma. Please note, many elite colleges require students to earn A Level scores in order to guarantee acceptance of credit.

## ***What are the benefits of earning an AICE Diploma?***

Earning the AICE Diploma in conjunction with completing the requisite 100 hours of community service, means the candidate will automatically earn the top Bright Futures scholarship. Otherwise, the Bright Futures Scholarship is dependent upon SAT/ACT scores, which the legislature can change from year to year. Furthermore, when earned at the end of the junior year it helps set Estero High School Cambridge students apart from other candidates, during the college application process. Our Cambridge graduates earned over \$4 million dollars, over the last two years because of their AICE Diplomas.

## ***How many AICE credits do I need to earn an AICE Diploma?***

Candidates must earn 7 total credits in AICE courses in order to earn the AICE Diploma. One credit must come from each of the three categories (Math/Science, Languages, and Humanities) and an additional three credits can come from whichever category the candidate chooses as well as the Elective category. The final credit must be acquired by successfully completing AICE Global Perspectives.

## ***How do I earn an AICE credit?***

When a candidate sits for an AICE examination and passes the test, the student earns a credit toward the AICE Diploma. When a student takes the exam in the May/June session, the results are typically returned in early August.

## ***How do parents find out if their child passed the AICE Exam?***

Students are given login instructions at the end of each school year, as well as at Open House in August (if they came to the Cambridge room). The students are told to print or take screenshots/pictures of everything because the site is only available for a few weeks. If students do not look up their scores, you may contact me, Carolyn Hutto at [CarolynHU@leeschools.net](mailto:CarolynHU@leeschools.net).

## ***How do graduates see their AICE scores when they are released in August?***

Seniors will receive their Results Login information before they graduate. They will be advised to take a picture of the information in case they lose the form. Graduates need to print/screenshot/take a picture of their results for their records in case there is a delay in their transcripts or Bright Futures payment.

### ***What if I do not pass an AICE examination? Do I lose ALL credit?***

If you fail an AICE examination, it does not impact the level of high school credit you receive for passing the course. Therefore, you still receive the necessary credit toward the local high school diploma. However, you will not have earned a credit toward the AICE Diploma, or the college equivalency credit.

### ***Can a student retest for a failed exam?***

Yes, but you will be charged the current Cambridge exam cost. Retakes are available in October/November or May/June. However, graduates will not be eligible for re-takes, only current high school students.

### ***How do I get a hard copy of the Cambridge transcript?***

There is no hard copy of the AICE transcript, but each year Statement of Results and Exam Certificates are delivered to the school. The Cambridge Coordinator will keep everything in your child's folder until they graduate. The reason being, if they lose their Exam Certificate, they are \$100 to replace. If at any time a student needs a copy, the Cambridge Coordinator will provide a photocopy so they can show FGCU or FSW when they dual enroll.

### ***What should my child do Senior year if they have already earned their AICE diploma as a Junior?***

If a student earns their AICE diploma their Junior year they can do all AICE courses or a blend of Dual-Enrollment and AICE. Since exam results don't arrive until after the Fall semester begins, it is better to have some AICE courses. If a student is no longer on campus, it is not possible to take any additional AICE classes.

### ***How many college credits can I earn while still in high school?***

Students can earn a maximum of 45 college credits while still enrolled in high school. Of course, this is difficult to accomplish and will require a high level of diligence from the student. On average, AICE students at Estero High School earn between 30 – 36 college credits.

### ***What is the history of the Cambridge program at Estero High?***

Estero High School became an official Centre in August 2010 and our first class graduated in 2014, with about 60 students. In contrast, our current Class of 2026 Freshman class has over 116 Cambridge AICE students. Over 89% of the Cambridge Class of 2022, earned their AICE Diploma, with 58% earning their AICE Diploma by their junior year. Even though not every student will earn an AICE diploma, our students are earning valuable college credits. In 2022, over 900 exams were passed, which is more than 2700 college credit hours for our students.

### ***Please explain further about the 3 year rule for exams to count towards the AICE Diploma and why are 9th graders encouraged to take it?***

With the return of a 7 period traditional schedule, 9th grade Cambridge students will be enrolled in AICE English General Paper. If a student takes General Paper during 9th grade, but does not earn their diploma in 11th grade, they will have to retake the General Paper exam (yes, even if they passed it).

### ***When should a student start taking the SAT/ACT?***

Students should begin this process their Junior year, preferably no later than the second semester of Junior year. If they need to keep retaking the exams their Senior year they could delay acceptances.

### ***If my child earns the AICE diploma, do they have to take the SAT or ACT?***

Bright Futures waives the SAT/ACT scores, although almost every university still requires SAT or ACT scores for admissions. Please check the websites of the schools that you are interested in attending to find the admissions requirements. You can also find course credit equivalency for the AICE exams they passed.

### ***Can we apply for another class to be added to the school program of studies?***

If you are interested in adding another Cambridge class, you may go to [www.CambridgeInternational.org](http://www.CambridgeInternational.org) and look at the list of syllabi available. You can then talk to Mrs. Hutto about possible additions. Sometimes the courses are not a great fit for our school.

### ***Will a university give credit for an AS Level course if A is not offered at a school?***

If the university states they accept AS then yes. If the university specifically says they only give credit for A Level, then that is their policy.

### ***When should a student start investigating Dual Enrollment?***

In the second semester of Sophomore year we offer the PERT test for placement into Dual Enrollment classes. If a student receives a qualifying score then they can start taking classes in their Junior year with FSW. If a student wants to do dual enrollment at FGCU, they only offer full time dual enrollment and SAT/ACT scores must be met. Most students do a mix of part-time Dual Enrollment, through FSW, and Cambridge AICE classes.

### ***Can Cambridge courses be taken online?***

There are no online Cambridge courses.

### ***Are National Honors Society (NHS) community service hours under the same requirements as Bright Futures?***

NHS requires you to earn 75 community service hours once you are a member, but if you are earning community service you might as well fulfill both requirements at once. Once you reach the 100 for Bright Futures, then you don't have to do all of the documentation, unless there is something else that NHS requires.

### ***What does Bright Futures Scholarship cover?***

Florida Academic Scholars (FAS) will receive an award to cover 100% of tuition and used to receive applicable fees and \$300 for both fall and spring semesters for additional educational expenses, although this just recently changed. Students will no longer receive the \$300 stipend each semester; [Click here](#) for the article.

Florida Medallion scholars (FMS) will receive an award to cover 75% of tuition and applicable fees. Students attending a public institution will have tuition and applicable fees covered. For more information about the Bright Futures Scholarship, please visit [Floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org](http://Floridastudentfinancialaidsg.org).

## ***Does Estero have a college counselor and/or help with scholarships?***

We have four high school counselors who do help with questions concerning college and scholarships. Mariana Garcia is our College & Career Specialist that is available to assist students with college applications, FAFSA, and scholarships. Her email address is [MarianaG@leeschools.net](mailto:MarianaG@leeschools.net)

## ***What is Florida Prepaid?***

The state of Florida has a prepayment plan for college to lock in the cost of tuition and optional dorm. Usually, a parent will sign up when their child is very young and do a five year payment plan (or single pay) to pay for their child's tuition. <https://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/>

There are also 529 plans, which are Education Savings Accounts. You can save for college expenses and earn tax savings. Search 529 college plan, and you will see that many financial firms offer them. Here is one example: <http://www.myfloridaprepaid.com/what-we-offer/529-savings-plan/>

## ***What is Global Perspectives?***

Global Perspectives is a research class that students need to pass along with the Global Perspectives exam. Students are required to use what they have learned in their other AICE classes to complete the following: a multimedia portion, essay portion, and pen/paper exam.

Here is the link to the syllabus:

<http://www.cambridgeinternational.org/programmes-and-qualifications/cambridge-international-as-and-a-level-global-perspectives-and-research-9239/>

## ***Estero High School Student/School Achievements***

- 90% of the Cambridge Class of 2022 earned their AICE Diploma
- Five students have earned the highest scores in the nation on Cambridge exams.
- Over 175 students have earned Outstanding Learner Awards from Cambridge for high marks on exams.
- Estero High School has represented Lee County with two Sunshine State Scholars.
- National Merit Scholarship winners Award winners in Art, Digital Design, and Technology
- The average GPA of a Cambridge student at Estero is over 4.0
- Estero offers 28 AICE courses and 15 Pre-AICE courses
- Estero AICE teachers are experienced in teaching AICE and college courses with 18 AICE courses having an exam pass rate above the Cambridge/AICE averages over the last two years.

More Information: <http://est.leeschools.net>

Follow our Instagram for updates, information & celebrations! @EsteroCambridge

For more information contact Carolyn Hutto at [CarolynHU@leeschools.net](mailto:CarolynHU@leeschools.net) or 239-947-9400.