



ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

A LEVEL HANDBOOK

This Handbook has been prepared for the information of A Level students and their parents. It must be read in conjunction with the Parent Information Booklet which is distributed to all families upon enrollment of a student at St. Mary's Academy.

Reviewed August 2006

Source: <http://sma.edu.pk/>

1.0 ST. MARY'S ACADEMY PROFILE

1.01 History

St. Mary's Cambridge School was established by the Mill Hill London Catholic Fathers in March 1949. Rev. Fr. Thijssen who became the founding principal started the school in the new Holy Family Hospital Building, Saidpur Road. Later on, the Sisters of the old Holy Family Hospital were shifted to the new hospital building and the old hospital building was given to the Diocesan Board of Education to operate St. Mary's Cambridge School.

In January 1956 St. Mary's School, Chaklala was established and educated a number of boys until 1964 when it was handed over to the P.A.F.

With the increasing demand for enrollments and the need for a boys' school in the Cantonment area St. Mary's Academy was established at Lalazar in 1962 with a senior section accommodating classes from Class Six to Matriculation and Senior Cambridge. The founding Principal was Rev. Fr. Patrick Byrne whose dream it was to eventually provide a comprehensive educational system from Nursery to A Levels and graduation. In 1966 the junior section commenced operation and in 1998 A level classes were added. For a few years girls were also enrolled in the junior primary classes. Currently girls are admitted to A Level.

Today St. Mary's Academy offers classes for students from Prep to Matriculation and A Level preparing students to follow in the footsteps of earlier St. Marians who have taken their place as honorable and leading Pakistanis and world citizens. St. Marians have excelled in academic and sporting fields and play an important role in Government, the professions, business and in the Defence Forces.

'NE ARDUA TERREANT'

NOTHING IS TOO DIFFICULT

1.02 Location

Tulsa Road, Lalazar, Rawalpindi Cantt. 46000

1.03 Telephone

051- 558 1819, 551 8250

2.0 A LEVEL PROGRAM

The school is a registered school with the University of Cambridge International Examinations (C.I.E.) for international examinations. Its registration number is PK 027. The O and A Level examinations are conducted at the school under the supervision of the British Council. The examination papers are both set and corrected in England.

The academic program is designed so that all students are provided with the opportunity to achieve their maximum potential. Alongside this rigorous academic program students are provided with opportunities to participate in sport and the other extra curricular activities of the school.

The school offers a wide range of academic subjects which is constantly being extended. Unlike many institutions the timetable is not set to oblige students to work within one specific area of the curriculum. Rather students indicate their preference and as far as possible the timetable is adjusted to accommodate these preferences.

St. Mary's Academy has a very qualified and experienced faculty who work full time at the school and so are available to the students outside of their scheduled classes. There is a low student teacher ratio (less than 1:20). This expert teaching is supported by well equipped laboratories for physics, chemistry, biology and computers and a library to which new resources are constantly being added.

The school has extensive outdoor sports facilities which are available to students during school hours and the weekly program for A Level students includes participation in the Friday sport's program. These facilities are also available outside of school hours for prearranged class sports activities provided the directions of the school security staff are followed.

Every A Level subject is divided into two sections – AS and A2 and there are examinations for each section with the final A Level result being a combination of the AS and the A2 results. The curriculum has been designed by Cambridge University so that the students study the AS units in the first year and the A2 units in the second year. Students take their AS examinations at the end of the first year and the A2 examinations at the end of the second year. It is possible to repeat an AS examinations in order to improve a grade but this is not recommended if a student has an A or B grade for an AS subject Permission to re-present as a school candidate rests with the principal.

3.0 ACADEMIC YEAR

The academic year for A Level students commences in August after announcement of the O Level results in early August. The A Level program is a two-year program. The first year of the program finishes the following mid May. At this time the students take their AS examinations and the second year commences on the first working day of August. Students would normally present for their final A2 Level examinations in the following May/June.

The school does not permit students to sit either as school or private candidates for the final A Level examinations until they have completed this two-year program. An exception is given to students studying A Level Urdu if they have obtained at O Level a Grade A or B in Urdu as a First Language (UrduA).

4.0 EXAMINATIONS

Students taking exams such as TOFEL, SAT or Achievement Test will not be exempted from internal assignments, exams and attendance at school except on the day actually scheduled for these examinations.

Study of courses other than those taught in the school and the appearing for outside examinations in no way exempt students from their commitments to the school.

5.0 ADMISSION TO A LEVEL

5.01 Eligibility - General Condition

A student who has passed G.C.E. O Level examination with C.I.E. or an equivalent examination is qualified to apply for admission. Normally students would be required to have a pass in at least six subjects with a Grade C or higher in those subjects to be studied at A Level.

The age of eligibility is normally between 16 and 17 years.

No applicant including a student from St. Mary's Academy can claim a right to admission to the A Level course. The school reserves the right to accept or reject any application. Admission is on merit and the Principal's decision including the subjects that the student may take, is final.

In exceptional circumstances the Principal has the right to waiver all or some of these general conditions.

In exceptional circumstances an application from a student who has completed matriculation or FSc (part 1) may be considered.

5.02 Students currently enrolled at St. Mary's Academy for O Level

For students enrolled at St. Mary's Academy for O Level application for A Level is made in June by completing the statement of intent. In August these students and their parents will be called for an interview after the announcement of the O Level results. At that time a student data update form will be completed together with the undertaking on Court Paper as provided on the attached sample. A copy of the A Level Handbook is given at the interview.

5.03 New students seeking admission to St. Mary's Academy for A Level

Application forms for admission can be obtained from the school office together with a copy of the A Level Handbook upon the payment of Rs.300. The application form must be returned within three days of the announcement of the O Level results.

Form 1 Application for Admission to Cambridge Section must be signed by the parent or declared guardian of the student. Incomplete or incorrectly filled forms are liable to be rejected.

Form 2 must be completed by the principal of the school from where the O Level examinations were completed and sent directly to the Principal of St. Mary's Academy.

Attached to Form 1 must be

- passport size current photograph
- an attested copy of the student's O Level results
- an attested copy of birth certificate or acceptable alternative evidence of date birth
- attested copies of school reports during the two years of O Level studies
- the undertaking given on court paper as per attached sample

5.04 Notification of admission

Applicants will be notified in writing of the outcome of their application

5.05 Completion of admission formalities

Admission formalities are completed when the necessary dues are paid and original documents of O Level results and birth certificate are produced to the school administration.

Students who were enrolled for O Level at St. Mary's Academy are required to pay the security fee unless previously paid and one month's fee in advance. Newly enrolled students are required to pay the admission fee, security fee and two months tuition fee in advance.

5.06 Cancellation of admission

If at any time there is any evidence of forged documents relating to admission the student concerned will be asked to withdraw from the school.

6.0 WITHDRAWAL

Intended withdrawal of a student should be notified in writing by the parent one month in advance or one month's fee will be charged.

Leaving certificate and character certificate will not be issued unless this rule is complied with.

7.0 LIABILITY FOR FEES

The parents/guardian are liable for fees from the first month in which the student attends St. Mary's Academy up until his notified withdrawal as provided for in 6.0 above or until the completion of the second year A Level examinations in June. Fees are due and payable for the month of July between taking AS examinations and the commencement of A2 in August.

The security charge is also required to be lodged with the school.

Examination fees as charged are to be paid before the entry is processed for forwarding to Cambridge University.

Parents/guardians are also responsible for the replacement/repair costs of all items lost or damaged by the student. These dues must be paid before results are issued.

After the due date a late fee will be charged on any of the above fees which are outstanding.

8.0 COMPUTER AND SCIENCE LABORATORIES

Students are responsible for the equipment being used by them in the laboratory. Any equipment missing or broken after a practical session will be the sole responsibility of the class or students who will have to make good the damage by paying the cost of the replacement or repair of the equipment. The decision of the Principal will be final in this matter.

Any student found deliberately damaging or interfering with equipment will be banned from the concerned laboratory.

9.0 LIBRARY

When not attending timetabled classes A Level students are expected to study in the library.

Books must be returned by the due date. If a book is required for a longer period, it must be produced to the librarian who will extend the period, if it is not required by someone else.

Some books due to demand will be on restricted loan.

Students who persistently fail to return books on time will have borrowing privileges withdrawn and a fine imposed.

If a student is responsible for a damaged or lost book that student will be required to pay the cost of replacing the book.

10.0 CONDUCT AND DISCIPLINE

Refer to the Parent Information booklet for a detailed discussion of this topic.

A Level students are given the privilege of not being required at school until their first teaching period and being permitted to leave after their last timetabled class for the day. Any student having a lesson Period 1 is expected to attend morning assembly. A special gate pass will be issued for this purpose.

All other school rules apply to A Level students.

11.0 TUITIONS

If a student attends class regularly and undertakes the study tasks given by the teacher there is no need to attend additional tuition classes. If a student does attend a tuition then in no way is this to interfere with the school study program.

At times the A Level teachers provide at no cost to the parents additional classes outside the regular school hours for purposes of revision and/or assistance to students having difficulties with their studies. When such classes are held attendance is compulsory.

12.0 PARENT TEACHER MEETINGS

Parents will be required to meet teachers twice a year to discuss the student's progress. More frequent contact between parents and teachers is encouraged.

See also this section in the Parent Information Booklet

The school will at all times possess the power and authority to amend and/or add any new regulations as may be deemed expedient without notice, either prospectively or retrospectively.

Reviewed August 2006

THIS UNDERTAKING IS TO BE PREPARED ON A Rs. 20/- BOND PAPER ONLY.

UNDERTAKING

I, hereby undertake, if admitted to St. Mary's Academy A Level class to abide by the following :-

1. That I will not indulge in any behavior or activities unbefitting a student and in particular I will not engage in any political activity.
2. That in case through any action, I violate the above undertaking I will be expelled from the school without further notice

Name of Student _____

Father's Name _____

Signature of Student _____

In the presence of :

Witness No. 1

Witness No. 2

Signature with official seal

Signature with official seal

Name : _____

Name :- _____

Address :- _____

Address :- _____

The Witness must be a Government Officer of Grade 17 or above

DECLARATION BY PARENT/GUARDIAN

I, _____ S/o, D/o _____
(Name of Parent/Guardian) (Name of Parent/Guardian's father)

do hereby state on solemn affirmation, that I bind myself responsible to the declaration by my son/ward submitted as above to St. Mary's Academy by him.

SECTION 2

SOME FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This section is designed to answer some of the frequently asked questions regarding A Level studies. However the school accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of this material. It is the responsibility of the student and his parents to check with the concerned authorities/institutions.

1.- WHY SHOULD I DO A LEVEL

- A Level is internationally recognized by universities and other educational institutions, business and industry
- A Level facilitates admission to a good university or college anywhere in the world
- It provides students with a positive educational experience that equips them for further study or employment. The course demands understanding and application of principles and concepts and does not rely on rote learning.
- The syllabus and examinations are set by approved persons at the University of Cambridge and papers are corrected in the UK by approved markers. There is strict security and papers are marked on merit and are a general and genuine reflection of the student's ability.
- Having an overseas qualification on your curriculum vitae can be an asset.
- There are no pre-requisites for any A Level subject and a candidate may appear as often as he chooses.
- Examinations are available twice a year in May/June and November/December

2. WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A LEVEL AND FSc

The A Level qualification is recognized world wide whereas the FSc course is limited to Pakistan and is not widely accepted for entry to universities and colleges outside Pakistan

3. HOW DOES A LEVEL HELP IN COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY ADMISSION

Previously merit was determined by marks obtained in Board examinations. However increasingly institutions are conducting their own assessments and admission is based on performance in these tests plus FSc or A Level.

Observations reveal that students having completed A Level do much better than those students with a background in FSc.

4. WHAT SUBJECTS AND HOW MANY SHOULD BE TAKEN FOR A LEVEL

The choice of subjects should be based on career options, a student's interest and skill and should keep as many avenues open as possible. There are no required combinations of subjects at A Level. However entry to some institutions requires a particular combination of subjects.

Generally a minimum of three A Level subjects is required. Some able students may elect to do four subjects. Students taking Urdu may take it as a fourth subject.

5. WHAT IS AN AS SUBJECT

An AS subject is one where the content is half that of a normal A Level subject but the degree of difficulty is that of an A Level subject. It is normally the first year of a full A Level subject but at times may be taken without the follow on of the second year of study. If being taken as a stand alone subject there may be some further options in terms of the syllabus. General Paper, English Language, Thinking Skills are all AS subjects only.

Generally for admission to University in Britain two AS subjects will be accepted as equivalent to an A Level subject. For admission to University in the USA the completion of a program of AS studies is deemed as the completion of Grade 12.

Some AS subjects are not permitted in combination at the same examination with some full A Level subjects. See the C.I.E. Handbooks for these details.

6. CAN I DO A LEVEL AFTER MATRICULATION

If a student has a very good matriculation result he/she may be accepted. However the different systems of education means that the student would need to put in consistent and extra-ordinary efforts to cope with the syllabus requirements of A Level.

Entry to some universities may require O Level English and mathematics. This would need to be checked by any matriculation student contemplating A Level studies.

7. WHAT ARE THE MAIN REQUIREMENTS OF STUDY AT A LEVEL

A student needs the ability to acquire self-discipline, self-motivation and management skills. At A Level the student must become less dependent on the teacher and more an

independent learner. The teacher should be seen as a guide, providing direction for your study, assisting you when you have difficulty understanding. The student must be prepared to follow the advice of the teacher, undertake the work set by the teacher and independently undertake further reading and research.

Outside of the teaching periods timetabled and the library periods at school an A Level student must be spending at least twenty five hours per week in private study. Attendance at tuitions for this time does not meet the requirement.

For students doing subjects which have a practical work component attendance at all practical classes is a must if the necessary skills required for the practical examination are to be gained.

8. HOW MUCH DOES THE A LEVEL EXAMINATION COST

C.I.E. charges an admission fee and a fee per subject. In addition the British Council levies its own administrative cost against these two fees and also charges a fee for any practical examination and for the forwarding to C.I.E. of computer projects and practical tasks.

9. SHOULD I STUDY PRIVATELY OR AT A SCHOOL FOR A LEVEL

A school environment provides stimulation from interaction with other students, library and laboratory facilities are also available and teachers are able to monitor, guide, answer questions.

A school will also provide recommendations, references, expected grades which are needed for provisional admission to reputable colleges and universities. Also expected grades can be critical if for some reason e.g. illness a student needs to apply for special consideration during the examination period.

Some subjects are not available to private candidates. See C.I.E. Syllabus to check this.

10. HOW DO I OBTAIN AN EQUIVALENCE CERTIFICATE

An equivalence certificate for O Level is obtained from the Inter-Board Committee of Chairman in Islamabad. This is required for admission to FSc. It is also required when you apply for admission to higher education institutions in Pakistan.

The equivalence certificate for A Level is also required.

In Pakistan the A Level certificate is equated to the Intermediate qualification although academically it is equivalent to the first year of a graduate program in Pakistan.

11. ARE IELTS, TOFEL AND SAT NECESSARY

Admission to foreign universities requires evidence of English proficiency. Usually IELTS satisfies this requirement for universities in Britain while TOFEL is required by universities in the USA.

SAT (Standardized Admission Test) are usually required for entry to colleges and universities in the USA.

SAT 1 and SAT 11 are also required for admission to LUMS or a student may sit for the LUMS admission test.

It is important to carefully check the individual requirements of each institution to which you wish to make application. The internet is a good means of accessing this information

12. WHAT IS THE CRITERIA FOR ADMISSION TO INSTITUTIONS IN PAKISTAN

This information is provided to assist students but must not be relied upon.

LUMS

LUMS admission test or SAT 1 and SAT 11 with three A Level passes with a minimum average grade of C or Intermediate with a minimum of 60%

GIK

Entrance examination patterned on SAT plus A Level with Physics and Mathematics with a minimum of C grade or FSc pre-engineering with at least 60%

NUST

This depends on the course selected

FAST

Three A Level subjects including mathematics or intermediate/BSc with mathematics

AGHA KHAN

FSc with at least 60% or three A Level with average of C. There is also an entry exam based on the SAT model and for short listed candidates an interview.

ARMY MEDICAL COLLEGE

Seats are allocated in different categories. Entrance examinations and examination results similar to Agha Khan are the criteria.

INSTITUTE OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION

Entrance examination and examination results are the criteria for admission. It is similar to LUMS.

NATIONAL COLLEGE FOR ARTS

For architecture A Level is accepted with mathematics being compulsory with an average of C grade. Otherwise 60% in Intermediate is required. There is also a test conducted by NCA and an interview.

ENGINEERING

The different institutions in Pakistan which offer engineering degrees have somewhat different entry requirements in terms of compulsory subjects. This needs to be checked before making your final decision as to A Level subjects. Except for computer engineering normally physics, chemistry and mathematics is required.

13. WHAT IS THE CRITERIA FOR ENTRY TO OVERSEAS UNIVERSITIES

This varies from country to country and from institution to institution. Generally in Britain two or three A Level subjects are required.

There is some information available in the school library. Other material is available on line, at the British Council, at the American Centre.

From time to time groups of overseas colleges and universities visit Pakistan and hold sessions in the larger cities. These are usually advertised in the English newspapers.

Acceptance by an overseas university or college does not guarantee the issuance of a student visa to that country. You need to consult the student visa section of the appropriate Embassy/High Commission to ascertain visa requirements and the timeline involved. For some countries you need to start the process twelve months in advance.

SECTION 3

SOME USEFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.cie.org.uk>

<http://www.britishcouncil.org.pk>

<http://www.scitsc.wlv.ac.uk/ukinfo/uk.map/html>

<http://www.ucas.ac.uk>

<http://www.yahoo.com/education/universities>

<http://www.infoseek.com>

<http://www.lycos.com/resources/college/1100000.html>

<http://www.webcrawler.com>

<http://www.excite.com>

<http://www.ets.org>

<http://www.toefl.org>

<http://www.petersons.com>

<http://www.cgf.com>

<http://www.studyusa.com>

<http://www.collegeboard.org/sat/htm/students/index001.html>

SECTION 4

SOME TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN A LEVEL

- Obtain a copy of the C.I.E. syllabus for each subject which you are studying. These are available from the school library and can be photocopied or download them from the C.I.E. website
- Closer to the examinations consult past papers and examiners reports and for those subjects for which they are available the mark scheme. These are all available in the school library.
- Be prepared to consult a wide range of books on each of the topics you are studying.
- Make study notes for yourself. These should have the reference to the source of the material (title, author, page) so that you can at a later date readily find the original material. Such notes are best in format of heading and point form notes.
- From your study notes abbreviate further so eventually you have just a couple of words which are sufficient to prompt you so you can write a paragraph or essay or solve a problem. Remember study notes also involve diagrams.
- Make a study plan for both school and home and stick to it. From time to time it might need to be revised
- Plan daily study hours and keep to them. However remember that generally we cannot study effectively for long hours without a break. Give yourself some leisure time and some time with your family.
- Plan where to study and work in a regular place
- For each study period at school and at home have a definite plan and keep to it.
- Revise work taught in class immediately after the lesson, read ahead on the topic to be taught and do long term revision
- If you fall behind in your work because of illness etc. when you return to study keep up with the current work and have a long term plan to catch up with the work missed. If all your energy and time goes into catching up you will be constantly behind in the current work and so derive little benefit from classes.
- Do not leave work until the last minute
- Do not make excuses to yourself or to your teacher, in the long term you are the person who suffers.
- Do not let yourself be easily distracted by friends and other activities.
- If you know there will be some time in the year when study time will be limited e.g. a family wedding plan well in advance and be ahead in your work and have a schedule to catch up after the event.
- Be prepared to make study a priority in your life which means that sometimes you will need to forego some other activities such as long hours in front of the TV watching cricket, full involvement in marriage preparations.
- Decide what motivates you for this study and write these goals for yourself and display them where you study. Do not rely upon exams to motivate you.
- Regular sleep patterns, good diet and exercise help us to study effectively

FORM 2

To,
The Principal
St. Mary's Academy
Tulsa Road
Lalazar

SCHOOL PRINCIPAL'S GENERAL REPORT

STUDENT _____ S/O D/O _____

SCHOOL _____

This student has applied for admission to A Level classes at St. Mary's Academy. Would you please complete this information and return it to the above address.

1. Applicants date of birth in words as per your school register

2. Please indicate by placing a tick in the appropriate column your opinion of this applicant with regard to :-

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Fail
Intelligence Industry & Application Emotional Stability Behavior & conduct					

3. Please indicate the extra curricular activities this applicant has taken part in and position/s held in the school

4. How many years has the applicant spent in your school?

5. How do you recommend that we accept this applicant?

Very Highly Highly With Reservation Not at All

Signature _____

Name _____

Date

School Stamp

ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

SUBJECT SELECTION FOR A LEVEL

Students are required to do a minimum of three subjects. Four subjects are also permissible. In addition to these subjects every student participates in the sports program.

NAME _____ ROLL NO. _____

Preferred number of subjects THREE FOUR

While every effort is made to accommodate all students subject choices within the timetable this may not always be possible so please list in order of preference five subjects. Number 1 would be your first preference

Accounting

Biology

Chemistry

Economics

Mathematics

Physics

Computing

Urdu

Business Studies

Further mathematics

Law

Signed _____

Date _____

ST. MARY'S ACADEMY

A LEVEL GATE PASS

STUDENT'S NAME _____

ROLL NUMBER _____

**THE STUDENT IS REQUIRED TO BE AT SCHOOL
AND MAY LEAVE BY THE FOLLOWING TIMES**



DAY	START			FINISH		
	SUMMER	WINTER	RAMAZAN	SUMMER	WINTER	RAMAZAN
DAY 1						
DAY 2						
DAY 3						
DAY 4						
DAY 5						

Secondary Coordinator

Student

Date _____

Parent

