


The American High School Diploma (AHSD)

What Is It & How Can It Help Your Child?

The AHSD is a full 3-year American high school qualification provided through Penn Foster — accredited by Cognia, DEAC, and the Middle States Association. In South Africa, SAQA evaluates the AHSD as comparable to the National Senior Certificate (NQF Level 4). Unlike the GED (which is a test), the AHSD is a complete diploma programme with coursework, assignments, and grades across 21 credits.

 **Prerequisite:** Students must complete the MobyMax curriculum before starting the AHSD programme. MobyMax builds the foundational knowledge across all core subjects that prepares students for high school-level coursework.

What's Involved?

21 Credits Over 3 Years

Students complete 16 core credits and 5 electives. Core subjects include English, Maths, Science, and Social Studies.

Full Diploma & Transcript

On completion, students receive an accredited diploma and a full transcript with grades and GPA — just like any American high school graduate.

Online Self-Paced Study

Students work through coursework online at their own pace, with assignments and assessments throughout each course.

Internationally Recognised

Penn Foster is accredited by Cognia, DEAC, and the Middle States Association — recognised by universities and employers worldwide.

Two Ways to Study

100% Online


- ✓ Study from anywhere in SA
- ✓ Self-paced — flexible hours
- ✓ All you need is internet access

At an Authorised School

- ✓ Structured daily timetable
- ✓ On-site teacher support
- ✓ Study alongside other students

University Pathways — What Parents Need to Know

- ✓ SAQA evaluates the AHSD as comparable to the National Senior Certificate (NQF Level 4)
- ✓ Recognised by USAf (the Matriculation Board) as a matric equivalent
- ✓ CAN qualify for matric exemption for SA university degree entry — but the student must also pass the SAT (minimum 1130) OR 2 AP exams (grade 3–5)
- ✓ Without SAT/AP, students can still access Higher Certificates (NQF 5) and Diploma courses (NQF 6) at SA colleges and universities
- ✓ Accepted widely at international universities, depending on the course

 Matric exemption does not guarantee university acceptance — students must still meet the specific entry requirements of their chosen university and faculty

Homeschool Students

A clear, internationally recognised exit qualification for homeschoolers completing their school career.

Students Wanting Options

Opens doors to SA universities (with SAT/AP), private colleges, and universities overseas.

3

Year Programme

21

Credits Required

16 + 5

Core + Electives

NQF 4

SAQA Level