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University Success Begins at ABP

Doha, January 25, 2015 – Since its inception in 2001, Qatar Foundation’s Academic Bridge Program (ABP) has distinguished itself from other academic preparatory systems throughout the region and the world by employing a unique learner-centered pedagogical approach, developing an innovative curriculum, and providing outstanding student support services.

While some view college and university admission statistics as the primary yardstick by which the ABP is measured, administrators and faculty members are quick to point out that getting into a university program is only the beginning of an ABP graduate’s academic journey.

“Yes, we work incredibly hard in assisting our students through the college application process,” said Dr. Marcie Linsey, ABP College Counselor. “We are very proud of the fact that more than 90% of our graduates in the past 13 years have gained admission to some of the best colleges and universities in the world.”

“However, our graduates report back to us year after year,” Dr. Linsey continued, “that the skills they developed during their time at the ABP led them to even greater success in their programs of study.”

“At the ABP, I learned how to study intensively and organize myself as a university student,” said Noor Odeh, a 2014 ABP graduate who now attends Northwestern University in Qatar. “I feel like I had a definite advantage over freshmen who came to NU-Q directly from high school.”

For students who aspire to attend English language universities, improving listening and speaking skills are just as important as reading, writing, science, or math. All ABP classes are conducted entirely in English, including Biology, Chemistry, and Physics labs as well as Algebra, Calculus, and computer skills courses.

“The ABP helped me improve my English speaking and writing skills,” said Amna Al-Badi, who graduated last year and now attends Qatar University (QU). “The ABP showed me how university life would actually be and it made me ready to attend QU.”

Beyond academic abilities, successful university students must manage their time and workload in order to complete assignments, meet deadlines, and study efficiently and effectively.

“One of the defining features of the ABP is that we teach not only subject matter competence, but also soft skills that are critical to student success, said Dr. Mark Newmark, Assistant Director for Academic Affairs at the ABP. “Those soft skills include seeking help when difficulties are encountered, keeping to deadlines, working with academic integrity, and getting to classes on time.”

“I learned to manage my time and keep up with assignments at the ABP,” said Abdullaziz Al-Shmery, a freshman at Texas A&M University at Qatar. “It was much easier to adapt to TAMU because of the valuable experience I had at the ABP.”

Many graduates reported that the experience and confidence they received during their ABP experience was the difference between success and failure at the post-secondary level.

“I developed my scientific English and my speaking ability,” said Abdulla Nasser Al-Thani, currently enrolled at Weill Cornell Medical College in Qatar. “I really gained confidence talking with my professors. If I had not attended the ABP, I don’t think I would have been successful at WCMC.”

Student support services are another important benefit of the ABP system. This one-to-one attention is especially significant for students who wish to attend the prestigious schools of the Hamad Bin Khalifa University (HBKU) Partnership in Education City.

“All of our faculty members work closely with the students,” said Dr. Linsey, “and we help them develop individual timelines to meet university application deadlines. We provide the platform for success and advice students of their roles and responsibilities in the preparation of their futures.”

This process, in addition to the focus on curricular content and soft skills, has led to the highest acceptance rate of students into HBKU Partner Universities in the history of the ABP. This past year, 42% of the ABP's graduates were offered admission to universities in Education City.

The ABP also boasts outstanding facilities that aid students in their research and their studies. The Learning Resource Center (LRC) houses an outstanding library, dozens of computers for student use, and also hosts tutoring by current faculty members.

“While our current students make good use of the tutoring opportunities,” said Ms. Asmaa Al-Qaisi, LRC Coordinator, “it is not unusual to see former students stop by with their university assignments. They know that they are always welcome for a friendly visit or to bring academic questions.”

Clearly, the ABP gives high school graduates a tremendous advantage when it comes to gaining admission to elite colleges and universities in the region and throughout the world. However, ABP graduates continue to praise the program for helping them adjust to university life faster, manage their time and course load better, and experience even greater success after entering their programs of study.

Keywords: ACADEMIC BRIDGE PROGRAM, ABP, QATAR FOUNDATION, EDUCATION CITY, NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY-QATAR, WEILL CORNELL MEDICAL COLLEGE, GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY-QATAR, HAMAD BIN KHALIFA UNIVERSITY PARTNERS

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About the Academic Bridge Program

The [Academic Bridge Program](#) (ABP) is a center of [Qatar Foundation](#). The mission of the ABP is to provide high school graduates of Qatari high schools (and other similar schools) who meet the admission requirements with the academic and personal skills for success in reputable English language universities around the world, with special emphasis on preparing students for the universities at Qatar Foundation. Since the launch of the ABP in 2001, the program has developed a model curriculum including English, math, science, and computer skills, combined with a wide range of other activities such as debate, Model United Nations, robotics, sports teams, and student government experience. The ABP is fully accredited by



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the Commission on English Language Accreditation (CEA) in the United States. This makes it easier for ABP graduates to fast track into universities in the United States without a university foundation year.