



Sharjah American  
International School

# **Sharjah American International School-Dubai Campus**

## **Distance Learning Guide**

Updated on Sunday August 9, 2020

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# 1) Message from the Principal



Dear SAIS Families,

Greetings from SAIS-Dubai. We hope that you and your loved ones are staying safe during these unprecedented times.

We'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for your patience and understanding as we navigate the best ways to secure our students' learning and engagement through this unusual time during this school closure. We know that this is a difficult time for you and your families, and we want to ensure that you are able to focus on the health and wellbeing of yourselves and your children. We want you to know that Sharjah American International School – Dubai Campus is committed to providing you with the support and resources you need during this time to meet the learning needs of your children.

Our goal is to provide enjoyable opportunities for our students to secure learning continuity and progression, as they continue to learn and grow. As one school community working to ensure the best interest of our students, we require your support in keeping our students actively engaged in learning, activities and communication with teachers and peers so that students will be prepared for the next grade level or opportunity that lies beyond graduation.

We are all in this situation together, and we would like to assure you that we are always here to support our school community through this distance learning experience.

Kind Regards,

[Mohammed Sultan](#)

## 2) Introduction: Distance Learning at SAIS Dubai

At SAIS Dubai, we are proud to deliver our high-quality education and fulfill our mission through the implementation of distance learning. We are also proud that we will be able to do so under exceptional circumstances. Our commitment is to provide an alternative means of education in the form of the SAIS Dubai Distance Learning Guide.

Distance Learning designates the experience students will have when school remains in session but when students are unable to physically attend school because of campus closure. While Distance Learning does replicate onsite learning, our teachers can deliver powerful instruction that allows students to meet expected standards in an online environment.

The SAIS Dubai Distance Learning experience aligns with our Learning Principles. Our students will be empowered to make choices about how they reach clearly defined learning goals; be engaged in online collaboration to solve authentic problems; feel safe to take intellectual risks while persevering through challenges; be supported with modeling, differentiation, specific feedback, and opportunities for reflection and revision; and, will continue to be passionate, intrinsically motivated, and inspired to action.

The success of our Distance Learning endeavor is a partnership and is dependent on careful planning by our dedicated faculty, appropriate student motivation and engagement, and strong parent support for this alternative mode of instruction. The result of such learning experiences will expand student academic progress and attend to student social and emotional well-being. Our faculty is prepared for this challenge. Our students are prepared for this challenge. Our parents are prepared for this challenge. SAIS is prepared for this challenge.

### **SAIS-Dubai Distance Learning Plan will:**

This SAIS-Dubai Distance Learning Guide will define the following:

- Implementation Procedure to conduct school remotely until resumption of normal operations
- Details the Expectations required of both teachers and families for the successful continuation of student learning and family communication

### **Distance Learning Platforms**

The following Online Platforms support both Distance Learning and faculty/student/family collaboration to ensure a quality student learning experience when planning and delivering remotely:

- 1) School email for students and Parents, Google Classroom, School Portal, Class Dojo (KG), School SMS are the communication tools used to contact and communicate with families from K -12.
- 2) *SEESaw* (KG), Google Classroom, Google Hangouts Meet, PADLETS are the online Distance Learning platforms for online learning.

In addition to the above resources, we encourage faculty, students, and parents to contact [it.helpdesk@saisdubai.com](mailto:it.helpdesk@saisdubai.com) for any tech related question and to expect a response within 48 hours. This email account is managed by our Online Tech Support Team.

### 3) Roles and Responsibilities

#### A - School Staff Roles and responsibilities

<p><u>Senior Leadership Team</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop plans for distance learning.</li> <li>• Communicate with faculty/staff and parents.</li> <li>• Support faculty/staff and parents during Distance Learning.</li> <li>• Ensure effective implementation of Distance Learning plans (Long term and short term) and accountability to student learning</li> </ul>
<p><u>Heads of Departments and Supervisors</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help their colleagues by sharing instructional resources. These might include Web sites, instructional materials, readings, or other resources to use with students.</li> <li>• Assist their colleagues implement effective teaching strategies. This help might include ideas for differentiating instruction or planning lessons in partnership with fellow teachers/co-teaching</li> <li>• Evaluate and track the progress of their department’s lesson planning and curriculum implementation</li> <li>• Monitor their department’s effectiveness of teaching and learning through class observation.</li> <li>• Collect, analyze, and share various types of student data including, but not limited to, academic progress, attendance, and behavior.</li> </ul>
<p>Subject / Homeroom Teachers:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop high-quality student learning experiences using a variety of online learning platforms to enhance lessons.</li> <li>• Collaborate with other members of your department to design distance learning experiences for your students by meeting in weekly PLCs.</li> <li>• Communicate frequently with your students and, as needed, with their parents</li> <li>• Provide timely feedback to parent/student inquiries to support your students’ learning.</li> <li>• Give constructive and timely feedback on student assignments and follow-up on student submission deadlines.</li> <li>• Register student attendance through learning activity submission by specified time and date.</li> <li>• Maintain high standard of formative/summative assessment as per Contingency Assessment Policy, writing &amp; proctoring CCSS aligned assessments in conjunction with curriculum calendar/Atlas curriculum mapping.</li> <li>• Provide guidance and support for students to aid in monitoring and supporting student wellbeing</li> </ul>
<p>EAL Teachers:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with co-teachers to design learning experiences that teach the students on your caseload</li> <li>• Provide supplementary learning activities for EAL students, either in the curriculum or with additional targeted learning needs</li> <li>• Communicate regularly with students on your caseload and/or their parents to ensure they have success with distance learning</li> <li>• Monitor the progress of students on your caseload and provide timely feedback</li> </ul>

<p>Learning Support Teachers:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Communicate in weekly PLC with the subject or classroom teachers who teach the students on your caseload</li> <li>• Offer to scaffold or modify assignments, as necessary, for students on your caseload to support subject or classroom teachers</li> <li>• Help subject or classroom teacher differentiate lessons and activities for the students on your caseload</li> <li>• Communicate regularly with students on your caseload and/or their parents to ensure they have success with distance learning</li> <li>• Provide supplementary learning activities for students on your caseload who may benefit from additional practice to close academic and curricular gaps</li> <li>• Support subject or classroom teacher with writing formative/summative assessments and proctoring exams for students on your caseload.</li> </ul>
<p>Performance based subject teachers.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Staying mindful of the resources and tools families may not have in their homes</li> <li>• Staying mindful of the instruments or resources families may not have in their home</li> <li>• Communicate regularly with your students and provide timely feedback</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">AP Coordinator</a> <a href="#">SAT Coordinator</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remain in contact with the College Board</li> <li>• Communicate information from the College Board to teachers, parents and students, as it becomes available through School Portal, virtual meetings, email and Padlet</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Social and Emotional Counselor</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serve as liaison for communication with students/families in crisis</li> <li>• Use Padlet to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Post links to videos and websites regarding self-regulation, anxiety and/or wellness strategies that students can practice during this time of Distance Learning.</li> <li>• Create counselling lessons that students could complete “at home” based on the current curriculum.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Host Office Hours at set times for students to access counselling sessions virtually</li> <li>• Students, parents, and guardians encouraged to schedule these meetings as needed</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Career and Guidance Counselor</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure continuity of the processing of student files for college applications.</li> <li>• Support grade 8 students in their transition to high school</li> <li>• Host Office Hours at set times for students to call in and access support virtually</li> <li>• Encourage students, parents, and guardians to schedule these meetings as needed</li> <li>• Support seniors with graduation protocols</li> </ul>
<p><a href="#">Librarian</a></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with colleagues to find resources for high-quality distance learning experiences and research</li> <li>• Regularly check in with subject and classroom teachers to identify ways to support their design of distance learning experiences</li> <li>• Maintain and update online library site for obtaining resources</li> <li>• Be available for teachers and students as needed for support</li> </ul>

<a href="#">Online Tech Support Team</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Review and develop how-to tutorials, ensuring teachers, students, and parents have the necessary manuals to excel in a distance learning environment</li><li>• Continually monitor the needs of teachers, students, and parents and troubleshoot their challenges, as needed</li><li>• Be available in person or remotely to provide on-demand tech support help</li></ul>
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## B – Students’ Roles and Responsibilities

- Establish daily routines for engaging in the learning experiences
- Identify a comfortable, quiet space in your home where you can work effectively and successfully
- Dedicate appropriate time to learning, comparable to a school day and/or as guided by your teacher/s.
- Check appropriate online platforms for information on courses, assignments, resources daily. (Classroom, School email, etc.)
- Complete assignments with integrity and academic honesty, doing your best work
- Submit all assignments in accordance with provided timeline and/or due dates. Communicate proactively with your teachers if you cannot meet deadlines or require additional support. (Per School’s Contingency Assessment Plan)
- Collaborate and support your peers in their learning
- Comply with SAIS-Dubai Code of Conduct including expectations for online etiquette
- Proactively seek out and communicate with other adults as different needs arise (see below)
- Take an active role in class. Participation and visibility are essential to the learning process.

<b>In Case you have a question about</b>	<b>You may Contact</b>
A subject, assignment, or resource	Your classroom or subject teacher
A technology-related problem or issue	Online tech support <a href="mailto:it.helpdesk@saisdubai.com">it.helpdesk@saisdubai.com</a> for any tech related question and to expect a response within 48 hours.  Or contact your Hallway supervisor for troubleshooting needs.
A personal, academic or social-emotional concern	Social Emotional counsellor, Head of School
Other issue related to distance learning	Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Assessment Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator, Subject Head Of Department, Hallway Supervisor, Head of School, Vice Principal



## C – Parents’ Roles and Responsibilities

- Establish routines and expectations
- Define the physical space for your child’s study
- Monitor communications from your children’s teachers
- Begin and end each day with a check-in
- Take an active role in helping your children process their learning
- Establish times for quiet work and reflection
- Encourage physical activity and/or exercise
- Remain mindful of your child’s stress or worry
- Monitor how much time your child is spending online
- Keep your children social, but set rules around their social media interactions
- Check your designated school Gmail account and School Portal for important school communication.

<b>In Case you have a question about</b>	<b>You may Contact</b>
A subject, assignment, or resource	Your classroom or subject teacher
A technology-related problem or issue	Online tech support <a href="mailto:it.helpdesk@saisdubai.com">it.helpdesk@saisdubai.com</a> for any tech related question and to expect a response within 48 hours.  Or contact your Hallway supervisor for troubleshooting needs.
A personal, academic or social-emotional concern	Social Emotional counsellor, Head of School
Other issue related to distance learning	Teaching and Learning Coordinator, Assessment Coordinator, Curriculum Coordinator, Subject Head Of Department, Hallway Supervisor, Head of School, Vice Principal

## 4) Guidelines for Distance Learning

### General Guidelines for Distance Learning (Faculty)

#### Feedback:

- Timely feedback is essential to student learning; this is especially so in online learning environments when/where students are unable to ask questions as they normally would in classroom setting.
- Clear communication regarding where/how students should ask questions and seek clarification specific to learning targets, task requirements, and/or deadlines
- Active monitoring of your email and Google Classroom for questions and communications from students/families.

#### Offline work:

- Refrain from requiring printing. All tasks must be completed on a device and uploaded digitally: picture, document, form, ppt, etc.
- Consider including offline activities in your lessons such as reading, engaging in discussions with a family member or friend remotely, writing in a journal, taking pictures, and/or making a video.

#### Work time:

- Strictly follow the divisional guidelines for time and schedule.
- Consider varying the activities you normally plan in a graduated way, from very different to slightly modified.
- Offer alternative opportunities for reading, research, online discussions/peer-feedback, and producing written work.
- Seek the support of colleagues and others who have specific interest and/or expertise in delivering online Distance Learning experiences.

#### Deadlines:

- Provide students ample time to complete assignments. More time than you would usually provide in class may be necessary for students.
- Keep tasks simple and directions clear to make sure students understand what they are required to do.

#### Bandwidth:

- If you embed videos, keep the size of the files small and avoid HD quality.
- Consider the size of the files to be downloaded by students; students' WIFI access may have limited bandwidth.

#### Files:

- Try to post only PDF or Google Application files (Apple iPads use pdf, Keynote, Pages, photos)
- Consider requiring all submissions to take place through Google Classroom or as a shared document.

[To contact SLT Members, Heads of Departments and Supervisors](#)  
please click on the link to get their email IDs.