

Ecole
d'Humanité

Ecole d'Humanité

The International Boarding School in the Swiss Alps



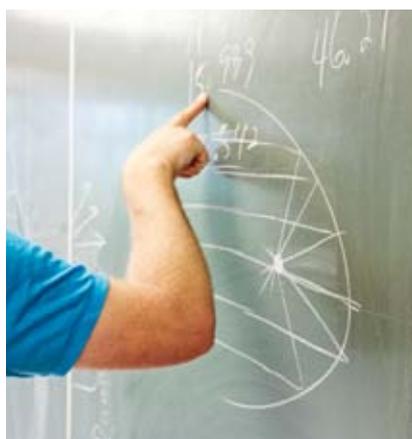
A World Village

The Ecole d'Humanité is located in the alpine village of Hasliberg Goldern in Switzerland, just off the rail line between Interlaken and Lucerne. Surrounded by the awe-inspiring peaks of the Bernese Oberland, our **international village for living, learning, and growing** is home to students and adults from some 20 different countries. The stunning natural setting provides both a **wholesome learning environment** and exceptional opportunities for outdoor activities including hiking, skiing, and climbing.

120 students are at home in fifteen «families» at the Ecole d'Humanité. Each family is headed by two or three teachers and lives in one of the school's chalets. Families eat together in the common dining hall, and each Wednesday is a dedicated «Family Evening» when Ecole families spend time together playing games, cooking, or working on projects. Living in a mixed group of students of both sexes and various ages and cultures helps everyone to **see beyond stereotypes and to appreciate individual differences.**

The Ecole d'Humanité functions as a community and students take charge of such important tasks as organizing weekend activities, delivering firewood, taking care of the goats, running the library, and raising awareness of global and environmental issues. Some are active in the Student Council or involved in peer counseling. Everyone participates in the weekly school meeting, which is chaired by students. At this weekly «Schulgemeinde», students can address both individual and community concerns, learning to find their own voices within a public forum.

The Ecole d'Humanité strives to realize a simple, environmentally responsible lifestyle. By limiting both material and electronic consumerism, we attempt to create a space where students can engage directly and honestly with other people, with our cultural heritage, and with the natural world. Additionally, creativity is able to thrive and students and teachers are free to **discover and explore their own unique strengths and passions** with a greater freedom from many of the distractions found in other settings.



Discover, experience, grow: living and learning in small, diverse groups

The academic program at the Ecole d'Humanité aims to promote meaningful understanding rather than surface knowledge. Unlike most high schools, Ecole students focus on three academic subjects per trimester. This allows them to concentrate on each one with special intensity. **Small classes** (*student-teacher ratio is 6:1*) **allow for individualized instruction and demand active participation.** In collaboration with their advisors, students choose their own courses each trimester, so classes are united by interests and abilities rather than age. Classes meet six days a week for 55–75 minutes, thus providing adequate time for in-depth learning and a wide variety of approaches to the subject matter.

Students are not «marked» with grades, but instead receive extensive feedback from their teachers based on their papers, tests, quizzes, projects, and oral presentations. Students also assess their own work in regular written reflections that help them come to see their education as primarily their own responsibility.

To balance the morning's intensive academic program, students devote their afternoons to the arts, sports, and practical work, selecting from some eighty possible courses. Blacksmithing, skiing or snowboarding, woodworking, painting, pottery, rock-climbing, soccer, basketball, the annual Shakespeare production, French theater, classical, jazz, folk, and pop music ensembles, instrumental and voice lessons, dancing, gardening, and animal husbandry are just a few of the fields students can choose to explore and then concentrate on in their afternoons.

Twice a year, in the fall and spring trimesters, the entire school sets out in small groups on 4- and 6-day hikes into the mountains of Switzerland and Italy. At the beginning of November, students devote an entire week, mornings and afternoons, to a single intensive project. Traditional festivals and rituals accent the school year, imposing a living rhythm on the regular passage of time.

Diplomas and College Admissions

The Ecole d'Humanité offers both **Swiss and American academic programs.** The American Program follows an American college preparatory curriculum and includes preparation for the College Board SAT exams, for which the Ecole d'Humanité is an official testing center. **Students can also prepare for exams leading to the AP International Diploma** (*see next page*) and entrance to universities around the world. **Recent graduates of the American Program have attended a wide array of colleges and universities,** including Bard, Bennington, Boston Conservatory, Brown, Colorado College, Dartmouth, Hampshire, New York University, Oberlin, Oxford, Reed, Sarah Lawrence, University of Chicago, University of Michigan, and the universities of Southampton, Richmond and Bristol in England.

Under normal circumstances a graduating student will have completed 20 course credits, including 3–4 credits of mathematics, 2–3 credits of science, 2 credits of history or social science, and 2–3 credits of a foreign language. He or she will also have written 2 Source Themes — extensive research papers on topics of the student's choice. In addition, most students will have completed several academic electives.

Our Swiss Program offers normal secondary and upper secondary school diplomas which are recognized throughout Switzerland. Older students can **prepare for university via the Swiss Matura exams or the College Board AP exams,** or they can take courses that increase their chances of winning a place in a demanding apprenticeship or a vocational college.

Our Diplomas At A Glance

- ✓ US High School Diploma, including preparation for the College Board SAT exams, leading to admission to universities and colleges in the United States, the UK, Canada, and English-taught universities throughout the world.
- ✓ Preparation for exams leading to the AP International Diploma (APID) and admission to universities in Switzerland and over 40 other countries.
- ✓ Swiss Matura for admission to Swiss and EU universities.
- ✓ Preparation for Swiss apprenticeships and vocational colleges.

The AP International Diploma

The Ecole d'Humanité offers full preparation for the exams leading to the **Advanced Placement International Diploma (APID)**. These exams qualify students for **entrance to universities in many European countries and around the world.**



The APID is granted by the College Board to students at international schools who have earned a U.S. High School Diploma and have, additionally, received passing scores on 5 AP exams in a constellation ensuring breadth and depth of study as well as a global perspective.

Universities in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, and many other countries will grant admission to students who achieve passing scores on the AP exams offered at the Ecole d'Humanité. These exams include English Language and Composition, German Language and Culture, World History, Calculus, Biology, Physics, Environmental Science, and Studio Art.

No AP courses or exams are required either to earn the High School Diploma or to gain entrance to U.S. colleges. Our AP courses are nevertheless open to all interested students. Students can choose to take any number of APs — or none at all — according to their own particular strengths, interests, and ambitions.

Outdoor

Nature is perhaps the greatest teacher, and our awe-inspiring setting leaves a lasting impression on all Ecole students. We live every day in the midst of spectacular mountains, forests, and meadows, cold and clear streams, and dramatically changeable weather. Ecole students have opportunities to camp, hike, bike, ski, and climb in one of the world's most impressive natural settings.

Many students leave the Ecole d'Humanité with a passion for the outdoors and a deep appreciation of the natural world, as well as a profound commitment to its preservation. **Our dedication to the highest safety standards throughout our Outdoor Program has led to our accreditation by the foundation *Safety in Adventures*.** We are the only school in Switzerland to have earned this recognition.

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d'Humanité Official Page

Our School Program is accredited by *AdvancEd* and our Outdoor Program is accredited by *Safety in Adventures*.



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