AMITY

Athena Award

Excellence in Mind, Engagement, Impact



AMITY
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL
AMSTERDAM

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WELCOME

Head of Senior School
Ruth Frost



The Athena Award represents the highest standard of holistic excellence at Amity.

I am delighted to introduce the Amity International School, Amsterdam Athena Award.

Athena represents excellence in mind, engagement and impact. It recognises students who demonstrate sustained academic commitment, intellectual curiosity and independent thinking, while engaging deeply in the wider life of the school and the world beyond it.

Rooted in the values of the IB Learner Profile, the Athena Award celebrates students who are knowledgeable and reflective, principled and open-minded, caring and courageous. It recognises those who take initiative, act with integrity and contribute meaningfully to their community.

Through purposeful planning, recording and reflection, students evidence not only what they achieve, but who they are becoming: balanced, thoughtful and responsible young people prepared to lead and serve.

Athena is a mark of distinction for those who aspire not simply to succeed, but to grow, to contribute and to make a lasting impact.

INTRODUCTION

The Athena Award is an ambitious and forward-looking framework that recognises excellence across and beyond the curriculum. It invites students to pursue depth in their academic studies while engaging meaningfully in the wider life of the school and the world around them. Through a broad range of pathways, students cultivate intellectual curiosity, creativity, confidence and strength of character.

Rooted in the principles of the IB Learner Profile, Athena encourages students to be knowledgeable and reflective, principled and open-minded, caring and courageous. It challenges them not only to achieve, but to think critically, act with integrity and contribute responsibly to their communities.

Within a shared structure of Mind, Engagement and Impact, the Athena Award is highly personalised. Students make thoughtful choices about the interests, global issues, skills and service to which they dedicate their time and energy ensuring that no two Athena journeys are the same. Careful planning, sustained commitment and reflective practice sit at the heart of the award, so that students are recognised not only for what they accomplish, but for how they grow.

Through this process, students develop balance, resilience and self-awareness. They learn to evaluate their progress, understand the wider implications of their actions and articulate the impact they make. In doing so, they build a rich and authentic profile of sustained commitment, leadership and intellectual engagement, qualities increasingly valued in Diploma pathways and competitive university applications. Athena provides tangible evidence of the skills, initiative and character that underpin strong personal statements and future success.

At the culmination of the Middle Years, students who achieve the Athena Award are recognised formally in celebration of their sustained commitment to excellence. More than a certificate, Athena represents the highest standard of holistic excellence at Amity and an outstanding foundation for the pathways that lie ahead.

THE ATHENA JOURNEY

The Amity Athena Award spans students' engagement across MY4 and MY5. It represents a sustained commitment to excellence in mind, engagement and impact during the final years of the Middle Years Programme.

Students are supported throughout their Athena journeys by tutors and subject teachers. However, responsibility for shaping and completing the award rests firmly with the students themselves. Athena demands independence, initiative and perseverance. Students are expected to be self motivated and committed, prepared to embrace challenge, explore new opportunities, push beyond their comfort zones and set meaningful personal goals.

Planning, recording and reflecting are central to the Athena Award and are deeply aligned with the IB Learner Profile and Approaches to Learning skills. Through careful planning and goal setting, students develop strong self management and organisational skills. By recording their experiences and progress, they strengthen communication and research skills. Through thoughtful reflection, they grow as reflective thinkers who can evaluate their development, recognise areas for improvement and understand the impact of their actions on others.

In this way, Athena nurtures students who are inquiring, knowledgeable and reflective, principled and caring, open minded and courageous. It empowers them to take ownership of their learning and to contribute thoughtfully and responsibly to their communities. As such, the Athena Award provides an outstanding foundation for Diploma study and for the academic and personal pathways that lie beyond.



MEETING THE CRITERIA

DURATION

The Athena Award is completed during MY4 and MY5

COMPONENTS

The Athena Award comprises 10 components

Excellence in Mind

1. Academic Commitment
2. Independent Project
3. Planning, Recording and Reflecting

Excellence in Engagement

4. Creative Expression
5. Physical Involvement
6. Reading
7. Current Affairs

Excellence of Impact

8. Responsibility
9. Service as Action
10. Oracy

CREDITS

There are 50 credits available, with each component worth a possible five credits. Students must gain at least one credit in every component to qualify for the Athena award and a minimum total of 20 credits. Students may pass be awarded a pass, bronze, silver or gold Athena Award. Opportunities to achieve credits are embedded in our curriculum, co-curriculum and super-curriculum, as well as through independent exploration and application.

ASSESSMENT

The Athena Award celebrates ambition, breadth and purposeful engagement across and beyond the curriculum. It is a partnership between students and their parents, tutors and teachers, recognising sustained commitment, intellectual curiosity and meaningful contribution. All students in MY4 and MY5 are encouraged to complete the Athena Award, embracing the opportunity to distinguish themselves through depth, balance and initiative.

Tutors champion the full breadth of opportunity the Award offers, encouraging students to step beyond their comfort zones and engage widely in the academic, cultural and service life of the school. Those ready to extend themselves further are supported and challenged to pursue the highest level of recognition within the Award, demonstrating sustained scholarship, leadership and impact over time.

As students progress, they take increasing ownership of their Athena journey, developing independence, reflection and clarity of purpose. Each activity within the Athena portfolio is reviewed against clear and consistent criteria, ensuring that credits reflect genuine commitment, contribution and growth. Selected components are assessed centrally to maintain fairness, integrity and high standards across the programme.

RECORD KEEPING

Students maintain a journal throughout the programme, setting personal targets, recording their engagement and reflecting thoughtfully on their growth. Dedicated time is provided for students to review progress with their tutor, ensuring regular guidance and meaningful dialogue.

Students take responsibility for approaching staff to request assessment and feedback on each activity. Credits are recorded centrally and within each student's journal, allowing progress to be tracked with clarity and purpose.

At the conclusion of the programme, students present their completed journals to their tutor, offering a holistic account of their planning, commitment and reflection. This final presentation marks the culmination of their Athena journey, recognising the development of intellectual commitment, breadth of engagement and meaningful impact achieved over time.

Mind

ACADEMIC COMMITMENT

'Excellence is never an accident. It is always the result of high intention, sincere effort and intelligent execution.' - Aristotle

Academic Commitment lies at the heart of the Athena Award. Where effort, discipline and a positive attitude to learning are strong, high levels of attainment naturally follow.

As a holistic programme, the Award recognises not only outcomes but the habits that underpin success. Academic Commitment reflects the sustained effort students demonstrate across all subjects, closely aligned with the MYP Approaches to Learning, including self management, organisation, collaboration, communication and critical thinking.

Credits are awarded on a sliding scale and generated centrally, ensuring fairness and consistency while recognising sustained academic focus and growth.





INDEPENDENT PROJECT

'Education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think.' - Albert Einstein

Curiosity is the spark that drives intellectual growth. The Independent Project offers students in MY4 and MY5 the freedom to pursue an area of genuine personal interest beyond the taught curriculum, exploring ideas with depth, independence and ambition.

Inspired by the ethos of the MYP Personal Project, this sustained inquiry is shaped by students' own questions and passions. Whether creative, investigative, experimental or research based, each project challenges students to think critically, innovate, solve problems and communicate their thinking with clarity and confidence.

Students take full ownership of the process, planning strategically, managing their time effectively and setting ambitious goals. Through this experience, they strengthen key MYP Approaches to Learning, including research, self management and reflection, developing the habits and mindsets that underpin effective, independent learners.

Criterion A: Planning (8)

- Clear learning and product goals
- Measurable success criteria
- Realistic, well managed plan
- Evidence of monitoring progress

Excellence shows intellectual ambition and sustained organisation.

Criterion B: Applying Skills and Developing the Outcome (8)

- Effective research and inquiry
- Critical and creative thinking
- Application of relevant subject skills
- Development of a high quality outcome

Excellence shows independence, challenge and sophisticated execution.

Criterion C: Reflecting and Evaluating (8)

- Evaluation against success criteria
- Evidence based judgement of strengths and limitations
- Reflection on learning and growth

Excellence shows perceptive, honest and analytical reflection.

Criterion D: Presentation (8)

- Clear structure and communication
- Effective evidence of process and outcome
- Appropriate academic conventions

Excellence shows professionalism, coherence and clarity.

Engagement

READING

'To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark.'- Victor Hugo

Reading is one of the most powerful habits a student can develop. It expands intellectual horizons, deepens knowledge, sharpens critical thinking and strengthens empathy. In a fast paced and increasingly digital world, sustained reading demands focus, imagination and reflection. For this reason, it holds a central place within the Athena Award.

Students are encouraged to read widely and ambitiously across genres, cultures and time periods, selecting intellectually stretching texts that challenge their assumptions and deepen their understanding. Texts that provoke reflection, demand analysis and stimulate discussion are particularly valued.

To gain Reading credits, students must read at least four suitably challenging books in English, selected in consultation with their English teacher or the School Librarian. Students demonstrate their engagement through written responses and discussion, evidencing thoughtful comprehension and critical reflection. One credit is awarded for each completed book.

A fifth credit may be earned either through the reading of an additional book in any language, or through the completion of a creative or analytical response inspired by one of the texts read. This encourages students not only to absorb ideas, but to respond to them with originality and insight.

The school library provides access to a wide and diverse range of literature to support this component.



READING

READING REFLECTION

To demonstrate thoughtful engagement with each text, students complete a structured reflection in their Athena Journal and discuss their responses with their English teacher or the School Librarian. Reflections should address the following areas:

Narrative and Structure
- What is the central narrative or theme?
- How does the story unfold over time?
- How are tension, climax and resolution constructed?

Character and Relationships
- How are key characters developed?
- What relationships or conflicts drive the story?
- Do characters evolve or transform?

Authorial Intent and Craft
- What might have motivated the author to tell this story?
- How does the writer use language, structure or perspective to shape meaning?

Personal and Critical Response
- Which aspects of the text were most compelling, and why?
- How does this work compare with other texts you have encountered?
- Would you recommend it, and what makes it worthy of discussion?

Responses should demonstrate insight, critical engagement and independent thought.

CREATIVE OR ANALYTICAL RESPONSE

As an alternative pathway to the fifth credit, students may complete a creative or analytical task inspired by one of their chosen texts. The response should be approximately one page in length and demonstrate imagination, stylistic awareness and thoughtful interpretation. Students may be invited to present their work and explain their creative choices.

Possible approaches include:

- Writing in the style of the author to extend or reimagine the narrative
- Redesigning the novel's cover and marketing materials with justification
- Crafting a diary entry from the perspective of a key character
- Adapting a scene into a dramatic script

A credit is awarded for work that reflects originality, depth of understanding and strong engagement with the text.

CURRENT AFFAIRS

'Young people, when informed and empowered, when they realise what they do truly makes a difference, can indeed change the world.' – Jane Goodall

An informed mind is essential to meaningful impact. Engaging with current affairs encourages students to look beyond themselves and develop awareness of the issues shaping their local community, country and the wider world.

Through regular exposure to news, discussion and debate, students strengthen their ability to analyse events critically, consider multiple perspectives and form balanced, well-reasoned opinions. This component fosters open mindedness, ethical awareness and confident communication, reflecting both the MYP Approaches to Learning and the outward facing spirit of the Athena Award.

To gain Current Affairs credits, students must demonstrate sustained engagement with recent events at local, national and international level, alongside a developing understanding of the complex challenges societies face. Credits are awarded by tutors in recognition of thoughtful participation, contribution and reflection.

Students may demonstrate engagement in a variety of ways, including:

- Presenting and reflecting on a news story during Tutor Time
- Contributing actively to discussion and debate
- Participating in current affairs quizzes or collaborative activities
- Contributing to a news board or written publication
- Writing an article for the Senior Newsletter
- Producing a short news summary or broadcast for their peers



PHYSICAL INVOLVEMENT

'Sports teaches you character. It teaches you to play by the rules. It teaches you to know what it feels like to win and lose — it teaches you about life.'

— Billie Jean King

Active engagement in physical activity is essential to a balanced and flourishing life. The Athena Award promotes a Sport for All ethos, encouraging every student to participate regularly in sport while also recognising those who pursue performance at a highly competitive level.

This component celebrates sustained engagement beyond timetabled PE lessons. Through sport and physical activity, students develop resilience, teamwork, discipline and leadership. Commitment to training, representing teams and contributing to events reflects the same habits of perseverance and purpose that underpin success in other areas of school life.

Students are encouraged to participate in school sport, inter house competitions and tournaments, while also taking initiative beyond school through local clubs, coaching and community sport. Engagement may take many forms, but sustained commitment over time is particularly valued.

Credits are awarded by PE staff or relevant coaches in recognition of participation, contribution, progress and dedication.



CREATIVE EXPRESSION

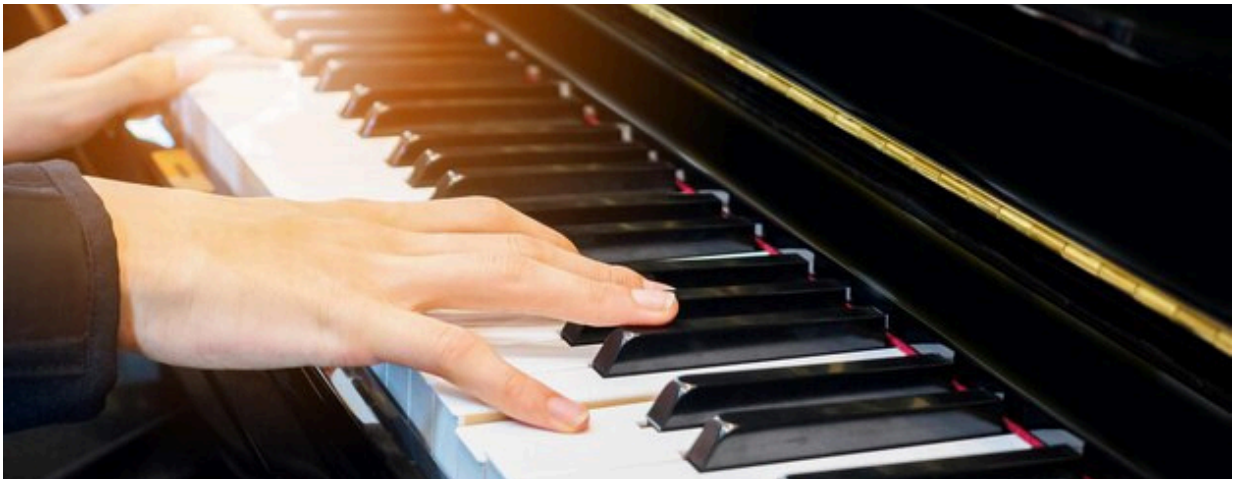
'Creativity grows out of two things: curiosity and imagination.' — Benny Goodman

Creative expression enriches intellectual life and gives voice to imagination, insight and perspective. The Athena Award encourages students to engage in the Performing and Creative Arts beyond the curriculum, while also recognising wider cultural pursuits that require creativity, strategy and expressive thinking.

Whether through music, drama, dance, visual arts, creative writing, film or other cultural disciplines, students cultivate resilience, focus and originality. Participation in ensembles, productions, competitions or cultural clubs demands rehearsal, preparation and reflection, mirroring the same habits of dedication and perseverance valued across the Athena Award.

Students are encouraged to explore the breadth of co-curricular opportunities available within school and to pursue creative or cultural interests within the wider community. Trying something new, performing before an audience, competing strategically or contributing behind the scenes all reflect meaningful engagement in cultural life.

A maximum of five credits is available within this component. Credits may be awarded for sustained participation in ensembles or cultural clubs, commitment to productions or performances, achievement in externally assessed music, drama or dance examinations, contribution to House competitions, or active involvement in recognised cultural initiatives. Credits recognise commitment, contribution, progress and level of application.



ORACY

"Courage is what it takes to stand up and speak;
courage is also what it takes to sit down and listen."
— Winston Churchill

The ability to communicate ideas clearly and confidently is one of the most valuable skills a student can develop. Whether presenting to a university panel, leading a discussion, pitching an idea or addressing an audience, effective public speaking requires preparation, clarity of thought and self-assurance.

The Oracy component of the Athena Award recognises the development of confident, articulate and purposeful communication. Through practice, reflection and feedback, students strengthen their ability to express ideas fluently, structure arguments coherently and engage an audience with authority and presence.

To qualify for assessment, a presentation must:

- Last at least two minutes
- Be delivered to an audience of five or more people
- Be presented in the student's own words (apart from prepared oracy)

A maximum of five credits is available within this component. Presentations are assessed in two areas:

Delivery
Clarity of speech, vocal control, pacing, confidence and engagement with the audience.

Content
Structure, relevance, depth of research where appropriate, use of evidence or examples, and clarity of conclusion.

Students may present on more than one occasion throughout the programme. Where multiple presentations are delivered, the highest score achieved will count towards the Athena Award. Students are encouraged to act on feedback and demonstrate improvement over time.

Public speaking opportunities may include:

- House or School assemblies
- Debates or Model United Nations
- School competitions
- Senior School Public Speaking competitions
- Class or tutor group presentations
- Participation in Public Speaking workshops

RESPONSIBILITY

'Success isn't about how much money you make; it's about the difference you make in people's lives'

- Michelle Obama

Leadership is not simply a title; it is the willingness to step forward, to take ownership and to act with integrity. The Responsibility component of the Athena Award recognises students who contribute actively to the life of the school and wider community through initiative, accountability and service.

Through leadership, students develop confidence, resilience and collaborative skills. They learn to identify challenges, propose solutions and take purposeful action. Whether leading a team, organising an event or supporting a project, students strengthen their capacity to influence positively and to work effectively with others.

To gain Responsibility credits, students must take on an appropriate role or lead a task or project for which they are solely or jointly accountable. A maximum of five credits is available within this component. Students may accumulate credits through more than one leadership opportunity.

Credits are awarded in recognition of the level of commitment, responsibility and application demonstrated. Longer term positions may carry a higher credit value than one off events. In all cases, staff consider the student's initiative, reliability, contribution and impact when determining the number of credits awarded.

Responsibility credits may be awarded for roles such as:

- Membership of the Student Council
- Senior School leadership positions
- Leading a student-run society
- Taking responsibility within a production or major event
- Leading or organising a charity initiative
- Co-ordinating an aspect of a House competition
- Taking responsibility for a tutor group activity or assembly

SERVICE AS ACTION

'At the end of the day, it's not about what you have or even what you've accomplished. It's about who you've lifted up, who you've made better. It's about what you've given back.' — Denzel Washington

Community mindedness lies at the heart of the Athena Award. Service as Action encourages students to contribute meaningfully to the life of the school and the wider community through kindness, initiative and sustained commitment.

Through service, students develop empathy, social awareness and humility. They learn to recognise need, respond thoughtfully and take purposeful action. Whether supporting peers, contributing to charitable initiatives or engaging in environmental or community projects, students strengthen their understanding of responsibility and collective wellbeing.

A maximum of five credits is available within this component. Students may accumulate credits through involvement in more than one activity. Credits reflect both the significance and duration of the commitment.

Credits may be awarded for:

One off contributions

- Supporting school events
- Contributing to pastoral or wellbeing initiatives
- Fundraising activities
- Assisting with community outreach projects

Sustained service commitments

- Participation in service focused co-curricular activities
- Mentoring or buddying younger students
- Involvement in environmental or sustainability initiatives
- Ongoing charity or community engagement projects

Service undertaken beyond school, such as community volunteering, environmental restoration or local outreach projects, may also be recognised. A brief verification from a supervising adult is required.

Mind

PLANNING, RECORDING AND REFLECTING

'Do the best you can until you know better. Then when you know better, do better.' — Maya Angelou

Throughout the Athena Award, students are given dedicated time to plan their goals, record their engagement and reflect on their development across each component of the programme.

Students set personal targets, monitor progress and consider how their experiences have shaped their academic commitment, breadth of engagement and capacity to make a meaningful impact. The Journal becomes a record of sustained effort, initiative and growth over time.

In their final reflection, students draw together their learning across the year, considering how they have developed independence, resilience, responsibility and clarity of purpose through their Athena journey.

At the conclusion of the programme, students present their completed Journal to their tutor. A maximum of five credits is awarded for this component. Tutors assess organisation, time management, record keeping and the depth and maturity of reflection demonstrated.



Athena

recognising excellence in
intellectual depth, active
engagement and purposeful impact.





AMITY ATHENA

Recognising Excellence Across and Beyond the Curriculum