

University pathways in Riyadh

NCUK International Foundation Year, planned from September 2027

Preview: subject to final approvals

Where schools and families get stuck



Schools

counsellors and leadership

The job Get students to a good university and show parents strong outcomes

The pain

- Students miss direct entry on grades or English, with no credible fallback
- Little time to vet options

They want A credible route to recommend, and a stronger destinations story



Parents

The job A good university for my child, at a cost I can control, with my child safe

The pain

- Is the route credible and recognised?
- Total cost, including living abroad
- A 17-year-old far from home

They want Confidence in the route, a clear total cost, and a year at home first



Students

Saudi and expat

The job Get into a good university abroad and prove my English

The pain

- Saudi: is my Thanawiyya enough? IELTS 5.0 before I can even apply
- Expat: right qualifications, but grades or subjects fall short of direct entry

They want A clear way in, English built in, and time to build study skills first

Do you see these gaps in your families? Which matters most?

Our answer: a foundation year, taught in Riyadh

A pre-university year, comparable to GCE A Level and designed by UK universities, with guaranteed* entry to one of 80+ NCUK partner universities.



What it is

32 weeks in Riyadh, from September 2027. Students choose a **Business** or **Computing** stream.



Who it is for

Students aged 17+ with a Saudi, American, British, IB or other secondary school qualification.



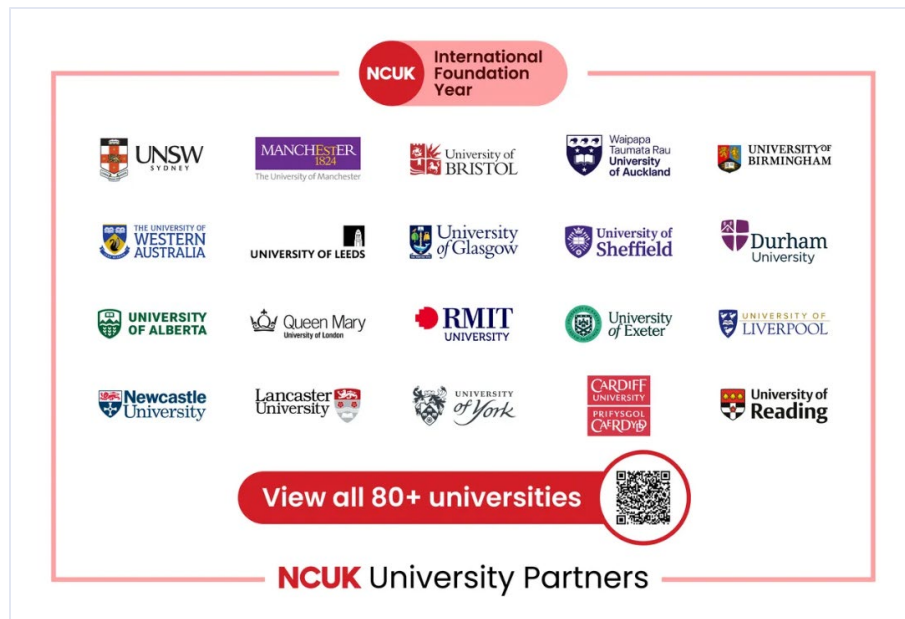
English built in

Students who need English start with an English course in Riyadh, matched to their level.

A year at home to prepare, then straight into the first year of a partner university.

*Guaranteed entry applies when NCUK progression conditions are met; each university sets its own criteria. Entry requirements by curriculum: see backup slide.

Where this can take your students



10 partners in the QS World Top 100
and 21 in the Top 200

UK Manchester =40, Bristol 57, Birmingham =68, Leeds =77, Sheffield =82, Durham 85

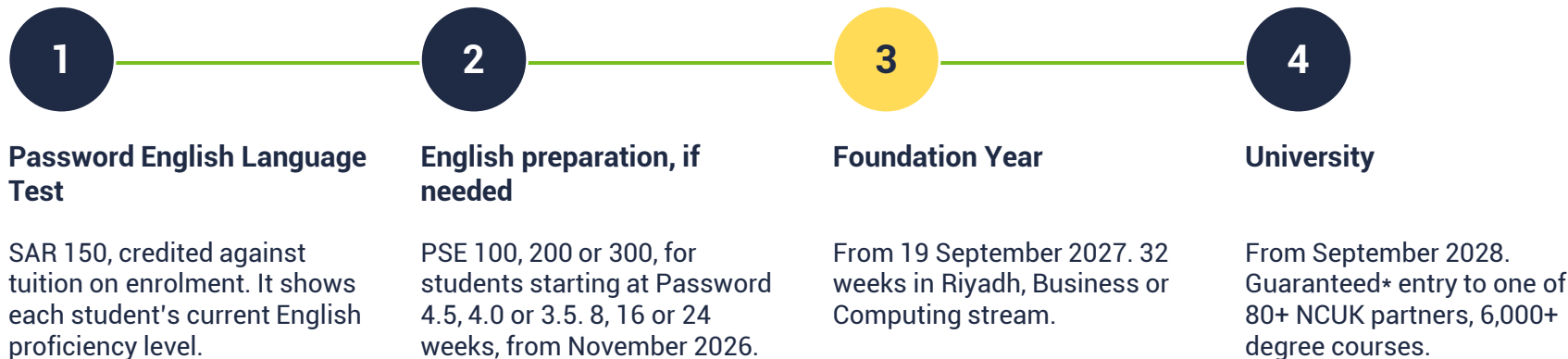
Australia UNSW Sydney 19, Western Australia =77

Canada Alberta 96

New Zealand Auckland 67

QS World University Rankings 2027 positions, as reported by NCUK (18 June 2026); "=" is a tied position. A selection of 80+ partners; image courtesy of NCUK. Each university sets its own entry criteria by course.

How the pathway works



Password English Language Test: the English test NCUK accepts instead of IELTS. Level 5.0 is needed to start the Foundation Year.
Pre-Sessional English (PSE): English courses in Riyadh that bring a student up to Password 5.0 before the Foundation Year starts.
Students already at Password 5.0 go straight to step 3.

*Guaranteed entry applies when NCUK progression conditions are met. Dates are planned and subject to final approvals.

Where we are, and how we could work together



Where we are

- Planned launch: September 2027 intake
- Final approvals are being completed, so nothing is confirmed until they are
- We are not asking the school for any commitment today



What we would like to explore

- Information sessions for students and parents, with your agreement
- A toolkit and events for your university guidance team
- A simple, non-commercial arrangement

Next step: a follow-up conversation with your school leadership and university guidance team.

Backup: entry requirements by curriculum

A pre-university programme comparable to GCE A Level, designed by UK universities, with guaranteed* entry to one of 80+ NCUK partner universities. Students choose a Business or Computing stream.



Saudi national section

Thanawiyya, 60% or more in all subjects



American section

US High School Diploma, cumulative GPA 2.0 or more



British programme

IGCSE or GCSE: 4 modules at grade 4 or above. A Level: 1 grade E

Also needed: age 17 or over when the year starts, and English at Password 5.0 or IELTS 5.0 (no skill below 4.5). Students below that start with an English preparation course.

Other curricula:

- IB Diploma: minimum 22 points. IB Middle Years Programme: 34 points or more, with grade 5 or above in Maths and English (progression may be limited to a small number of universities).
- India: Year 10, 70%. Year 11, 65% average. Standard 12, 40% average (limited progression options between 40% and 50%).
- Pakistan: Intermediate or Higher Secondary Certificate, 50% or more average (50% or more in Maths and English, if studied).

Other curricula: see NCUK's entry requirements. *Guaranteed entry applies when NCUK progression conditions are met; each university sets its own criteria.

Backup: indicative investment

SAR 58,000

Foundation Year

32 weeks, in Riyadh, September 2027

English preparation (Pre-Sessional English, PSE), if needed

PSE 100

from Password 4.5, 8 weeks

SAR 9,750

PSE 200

from Password 4.0, 16 weeks

SAR 19,000

PSE 300

from Password 3.5, 24 weeks

SAR 28,500

Total from SAR 58,000 to SAR 86,500, depending on how much English a student needs.

Indicative and subject to final approval; VAT treatment to be confirmed. Below Password 3.5, English is quoted after the test. The Password Test (SAR 150) is credited against tuition.

Appendix: what students study

Business stream

credits

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) 40

Academic reading, writing, speaking and listening, to about CEFR B2.

Business Studies 25

How businesses work: marketing, finance, operations, people.

Economics 25

How markets work: supply and demand, inflation, growth, trade.

Global Studies 25

21st-century global issues, researched from several perspectives.

Computing stream

credits

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) 40

Academic reading, writing, speaking and listening, to about CEFR B2.

Computer Science 25

Computational thinking, Python, networking, security and ethics.

Technical Maths 25

Algebra, trigonometry, calculus, probability and statistics.

Business Studies 25

How businesses work: marketing, finance, operations, people.

Plus Skills for Success: an online module (5 credits). **Each stream: 115 credits, about 540 guided hours.**

Source: NCUK 2026-27 module specifications and module overview. Planned Riyadh offer; module list and timetable to be confirmed.

Appendix: how students are assessed

Module	Assessment (share of module mark)
English for Academic Purposes (EAP)	25% listening into speaking (10 min) 25% reading into writing (1,000-1,200 words) 50% exam (four skills)
Business Studies	30% group start-up project 30% reflective journal 40% exam (2 h 40)
Economics	40% case report (1,350-1,650 words) 60% exam (2 h 30)
Global Studies	50% semester 1 test (2 h) 30% security essay (1,800 words) 20% justice and inequality essay (1,600 words)
Computer Science	30% Python portfolio 30% coursework report (2,000 words) 40% exam (2 h 30)
Technical Maths	50% semester 1 test 50% final exam

Skills for Success (online) is separate. Source: NCUK 2026-27 module specifications. Assessment timings assume NCUK's 30-week year; Riyadh timetable to be confirmed.

Appendix: grading and English

Subject modules

Grade	Mark	NCUK points
A*	80% or more	56
A	70-79%	48
B	60-69%	40
C	50-59%	32
D	40-49%	24
E	35-39%	16

English (EAP) and IELTS equivalent

Grade	Mark	IELTS equivalent
A*	90% or more	7.5
A	80-89%	7.0
B	70-79%	6.5
C	60-69%	6.0
D	50-59%	5.5
E	40-49%	5.0

Each university sets its own progression criteria at course level.

Source: NCUK International Foundation Year Programme Overview (June 2026). Partner universities generally accept NCUK's English modules as proof of English; each university sets its own rules.