

Hanoi–Amsterdam High School for the Gifted

Hanoi, Vietnam



Born of a 1972 Amsterdam solidarity gift, this Hanoi lakeside academy for the gifted keeps stacking science Olympiad medals.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	62/100
Academic outcomes	78/100
University placement	62/100
Prestige & heritage	76/100
Alumni network	14/100
Facilities	62/100
Transparency	45/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

Hanoi–Amsterdam High School for the Gifted occupies a distinct place in Vietnam’s state-school hierarchy: a selective academic powerhouse with a long record in Olympiad culture, specialist teaching and high-stakes admissions. Founded in 1985, it serves ages 15–18 as a day school in Hanoi, teaching in Vietnamese with English also in use. The school’s own site makes its focus plain. This is a “trường chuyên” in the full Vietnamese sense: subject-streamed classes in English, chemistry, physics, Russian, French, biology, history, informatics, mathematics, Chinese, literature and geography. For parents, that matters. This is not a broad, gently differentiated comprehensive. It is a school built for *intellectual competition*, *exam pressure* and *subject specialisation*.

What puts it on a shortlist is the combination of prestige, depth and ecosystem. Hanoi-Amsterdam sits in the small group of Vietnamese schools that feed national teams, scholarship wins and elite university applications while sustaining a dense student culture of clubs, debates, STEM events and high-output peer networks. The homepage alone is crowded with AI competition results, international science Olympiad selection notices, debate tournaments and scholarship news. That reflects a school where top students sharpen one another. The payoff is **serious academic traction** and **peer intensity** that few schools can match. The cost, in human terms, is obvious too: weaker self-starters get lost, and students who need pastoral hand-holding or a slower pace will find the atmosphere unforgiving.

The market position is clear. This is a top-tier public gifted high school, not an international school and not a bilingual lifestyle brand. Its value lies in selection, reputation and concentration of talent, not in glossy facilities or foreign curricula. The age range is narrow — ***15-18*** — and the model is unapologetically academic. Parents who want a school with a wide ability range, heavy individual coaching or a softer social climate should look elsewhere. Parents who want **hard academic stretch**, **status in the Vietnamese system** and access to an alumni-grade student network built through selective entry have a strong reason to consider it.

The right student for Hanoi-Amsterdam is ambitious, resilient and already operating at the top of the local curve. They enjoy mastering a subject, not merely passing it; they can handle constant comparison with other high achievers; and they gain energy from competition rather than shrinking under it. A child who wants sport, pastoral warmth and open-ended exploration as the centre of school life will not get the best from this environment. A child who wants **deep subject identity**, **fast company** and a school culture that treats academic distinction as the main event will. The school’s special quality is simple: it concentrates exceptional students in one place and gives them reasons to push harder.

STRENGTHS

- One of Hanoi's four regional magnet schools, regarded as one of the most prestigious and academically selective high schools in Vietnam, with entry historically requiring top marks and a citywide exam.
- Acceptance rate is often as low as 3% for the more selective classes, such as English, chemistry, physics, and mathematics, reflecting a genuinely rigorous academic filter.
- Students have won gold medals at the International Physics Olympiad (2019) and International Chemistry Olympiad (2019), plus a silver medal at the International Mathematical Olympiad (2019), evidencing sustained strength in STEM competitions.
- As a public school, tuition is free under Resolution 217/2025/QH15, with only \$50-\$100 in annual additional costs, making it markedly cheaper than private or international alternatives in Hanoi.
- Students can specialize in one of 12 subject areas including literature, mathematics,

TRADE - OFFS

- Instruction follows the Vietnamese national curriculum entirely in Vietnamese; the school does not offer IB, A-Level or another internationally recognised qualification track.
- As of April 2, 2024, Hanoi has stopped accepting new students to Hanoi-Amsterdam's 6th grade as per the Vietnamese Ministry of Education and Training's new regulations, closing the traditional early-entry route many families relied on.
- The admission process is always stressful due to the high competition ratio and the immense pressure on students preparing for the exam, according to a former Deputy Minister of Education, signalling a demanding exam culture rather than a low-stakes environment.
- Enrollment is approximately 3,000 students across grades 6-12 with a faculty of 190, implying a large-scale public school setting rather than small, highly personalised classes.

computer science, physics, chemistry, biology, and several foreign languages, offering unusually broad academic tracking within a single public school.

ADMISSIONS

Entry is via a competitive citywide examination process rather than open enrollment. Historically students could apply from grade 6, but as of April 2024 Hanoi suspended 6th-grade intake at the school under new Ministry of Education regulations, shifting the main entry point to grade 10. Candidates for the specialized classes sit multiple papers over consecutive days, including a general academic exam, an English proficiency test, and subject-specific advanced papers matched to their intended specialization (mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, literature, languages, etc.). Competition is intense: acceptance for the most sought-after classes (English, physics, chemistry, mathematics) has been reported as low as 3%. Prior academic transcripts and strong Vietnamese-language ability are effectively required, which limits access for non-Vietnamese-speaking transfer students.

WTS RATING 

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