

Lycée Descartes

Rabat, Morocco



In Agdal, graduates trade mortarboards for embroidered tarbouches, crowning a Baccalaureate pipeline that runs clear through to classes préparatoires.

RANKING DIMENSIONS

Overall	57/100
Academic outcomes	59/100
University placement	56/100
Prestige & heritage	57/100
Alumni network	56/100
Facilities	56/100
Transparency	45/100

EDITOR'S VERDICT

At Lycée Descartes in Agdal, the distinctive rite of passage is not a mortarboard but the embroidered tarbouche worn at graduation: a neat signal that this is a French school in Morocco, not a generic international campus with a French label attached. Founded in 1963, it runs as a non-religious day school for ages 3 to 18, teaching in French, Arabic and English, and its academic spine is explicit: the French Baccalaureate, with a route that extends to classes préparatoires. For parents who want a school with a *clear academic chain of command*, that matters. There is no ambiguity about what the school is for.

Its market position is straightforward. This is an AEFÉ school, Homologué, and part of the established French overseas system rather than a local imitation of it. That gives it **institutional weight** and a curriculum with external coherence. It also narrows the fit. Lycée Descartes suits families who want continuity into the French system, whether for eventual return to France, entry into French-speaking universities, or access to the selective post-bac culture that sits behind the classes préparatoires route. Parents hunting for broad curricular choice, a US-style extracurricular pitch, or the looser culture of many Anglo-international schools will find this a **more exacting** proposition.

Fees place it in a serious but not ultra-luxury bracket for a capital-city international day school: the average annual day fee across the full age range is ****27,655,397 KHR****. That figure buys a school with a **defined intellectual identity**, not a lifestyle product. The strongest fit is the student who thrives on structure, handles a demanding French-medium academic environment, and does not need a school to dilute its expectations in the name of flexibility. Children who want a **disciplined, language-rich** education with French as the working core and Arabic and English in the mix will find a coherent offer here. Those who need a softer, more bespoke, less prescriptive environment should look elsewhere.

STRENGTHS

- Accredited by AEFÉ (Agence pour l'Enseignement Français à l'Étranger), guaranteeing conformity with the French national curriculum and Baccalaureate examinations.
- Leads to the French Baccalaureate, a qualification recognised for direct entry to French and many international universities.
- Located in Rabat, giving access to a large, established French expatriate and diplomatic community rather than an isolated campus.
- One of the largest French schools operating outside France, offering continuity from primary through terminale on affiliated sites.
- Long-standing presence in Morocco means an established alumni and staff network familiar with transitions to French higher education.

TRADE-OFFS

- Day school only, with no boarding option, which is a limitation for families based outside Rabat.
- High enrollment demand means admission, especially outside the priority AEFÉ categories, can be highly competitive and subject to waiting lists.
- Curriculum is narrowly French-track; families seeking IB, British, or bilingual-diploma flexibility will not find it here.
- As with most AEFÉ schools abroad, fees are set in a band aimed at diplomatic and professional expatriate incomes, which can be a stretch for locally paid families.

ADMISSIONS

Entry points align with the French school calendar (September start) at any grade level, subject to space. AEFE rules give priority to French nationals and children of France-based diplomatic or corporate postings, with remaining places open to other nationalities, including Moroccan families. Applications are made directly through the school office with prior school records and, at some levels, a placement assessment. Demand regularly exceeds capacity, particularly in the early primary and terminale years, so early application is advised.

WTS RATING 

This profile summarises editorial research by World's Top Schools. Verify all admissions dates directly with the school before submitting. Sources are cited in the full online profile at WorldsTopSchools.com/schools/sch_937e9e94d9.