



Digital Private School

Language Policy

Rationale

We are committed to language learning and to encourage students to be effective communicators as one of the skills which are needed in the 21st Century. Language development is seen as central to the pedagogical approach at DPS and all teachers are language teachers across the school. We ensure that all teachers, whether teaching a language subject or not, work to develop inquiring and enthusiastic readers, writers, speakers, and listeners. We advocate the learning of language through inquiry, allowing students to make connections with context, to explore and investigate. We respect that our students are mainly first language speakers of Arabic with English as an additional language. A few students have their own mother tongue as well as learning English and Arabic as additional languages.

Purpose of the policy

The purpose of this policy is:

- support for mother/host tongue and the host country's rich culture
- support for students who are not proficient in the language of instruction
- acknowledge that some students have a different mother tongue to the host country
- ensure that in addition to supporting the host-nation language and the mother tongue, students at DPS are given every opportunity to learn and advance in other languages to promote multilingualism.
- define language assessment procedures for students enrolling in the school as well as the placement defining process for students entering a language acquisition program.
- outline support initiatives for students who are not proficient in the subject-specific language of instruction.
- ensure our library contains books in different mother tongues so that students and staff have a diverse range of reading material to read, also books are available in other languages.
- support our parents by communicating in Arabic and English

Beliefs and values in language

Our school is a bilingual, international Arabic-English school, with Arabic as the language of instruction for some of the single subjects and English as the main language of instruction. We use the local MOE curriculum documents for the mandated subjects in Arabic (Arabic, Islamic and Social Studies). We aim to provide skills of language and communication in an ever-changing world. We believe in international-mindedness and celebrate our diverse community of learners. We learn to express ourselves and our ideas in the most comprehensive way. This is made possible with high expectations for mastering both languages – Arabic and English. Our teachers work to develop and improve all language skills: listening, understanding, speaking, reading and writing. We know our students have different learning styles and abilities; therefore, we aim to differentiate and personalise the learning process, wherever it is possible.

The following points summarise the language profile of students currently studying at Digital Private School.

- 0.5% of students have English as their mother tongue.

- 9.3% of students are international students who have their own mother tongue. They speak different levels of English and are learning Arabic as an additional language.
- 90.7% of students have Arabic as their mother tongue.
- 99.5% of students are second language learners of English.
- English is the language of instruction.

Language Programmes at DPS

English is the language of instruction and the primary language of communication at DPS. It is the second language for the majority of our students. Arabic is the first language and is used with varying degrees of proficiency, from native speakers to beginners (even though it is their mother tongue).

The primary language of instruction at DPS is English with Arabic being the mother tongue (and host-nation language) of most of the students enrolled. Both English and Arabic are required subjects from Kindergarten to Grade 12, with the following number of minutes stipulated per week by the Sultanate of Oman Ministry of Education for bilingual international schools:

Grade	Arabic	English		Grade	Arabic	English
KG1	NA	NA		3	330 mins	270 mins
KG2	NA	NA		4	270 mins	270 mins
1	440 mins	270 mins		5	270 mins	270 mins
2	440 mins	270 mins		6	270 mins	270 mins
Grade 7-12	MOE stipulates to offer the number of lessons to meet the IB expectations of more than 50 hours per year.					

KG

In KG, almost all students are Arabic first language speakers, with a few being English first language speakers. Developing the students' mother tongue is a priority in this early stage of learning. In KG, the programme is bilingual with 50% of lesson allocation to each language. This model supports all both languages as the programme is taught simultaneously in both languages, allowing students to make connections between both languages as well as to different subjects within the programme.

Grade 1-6

In Grade 1-6, English is the main language of instruction for all students. However English and Arabic teachers regularly collaborate to ensure consistency and deep connections are made between the two languages through key vocabulary and understanding. They provide a classroom that is rich in both languages to promote student interpretation and understanding of the curriculum. Instructional methods include class discussion, group and team projects, oral presentations, reading, teacher led activities, student led activities, and research. Through classroom activities, students will develop all four areas of language learning: speaking, listening, writing and reading. The DPS English Scope and Sequence is followed to develop sequential language learning along agreed objectives and conceptual frameworks.

Grade 7-10 (MYP 2-5)

In MYP, we offer Language & Literature and Language Acquisition in English and Arabic to the students. Students are exposed to a range of texts from a wide variety of cultures through the

medium of English. Every effort is made to provide students with texts and material that is culturally and contextually relevant and acceptable.

In the MYP, our existing students are enrolled in Language and Literature classes taught in both English and Arabic. As part of the admissions process, students' proficiency in English and Arabic is evaluated. This assessment contributes to the decision-making process regarding the appropriate MYP language courses for each student. A student should achieve Phase 4 in Language Acquisition before moving to Language and Literature.

Language and Literature

The English and Arabic language and literature courses are crafted to immerse students in the examination of numerous facets of language and literary works. Students delve into a diverse array of texts sourced from global authors across different historical eras and contemporary settings. They analyse a variety of literary genres and non-literary materials, such as poetry, novels, dramas, and documentaries, while developing their abilities in oral and written communication.

Language Acquisition: English/Arabic as Additional Languages (EAL/AAL)

The curriculum for EAL/AAL language acquisition classes offers students the chance to explore the intricacies, processes, and artistry of language and the concept of culture. It encourages students to recognise the diversity in lifestyles, perspectives, and behaviours across the globe. Designed to bolster students' academic communication in English or Arabic, the curriculum employs concept-based learning activities to cultivate, reinforce, and apply reading, writing, listening, and oral communication strategies.

Aligned with the aims and objectives of the MYP, EAL/AAL caters to the specific learning requirements of students, aiding their integration into mainstream classes. The course emphasises the enhancement of students' English/Arabic language proficiency to equip them with the requisite academic language skills for success in their core subjects.

Language Learning Options

Recognizing the diverse student needs and that differentiation within our classes is crucial for success for all students, Digital Private School PYP/MYP language learning options include the following:

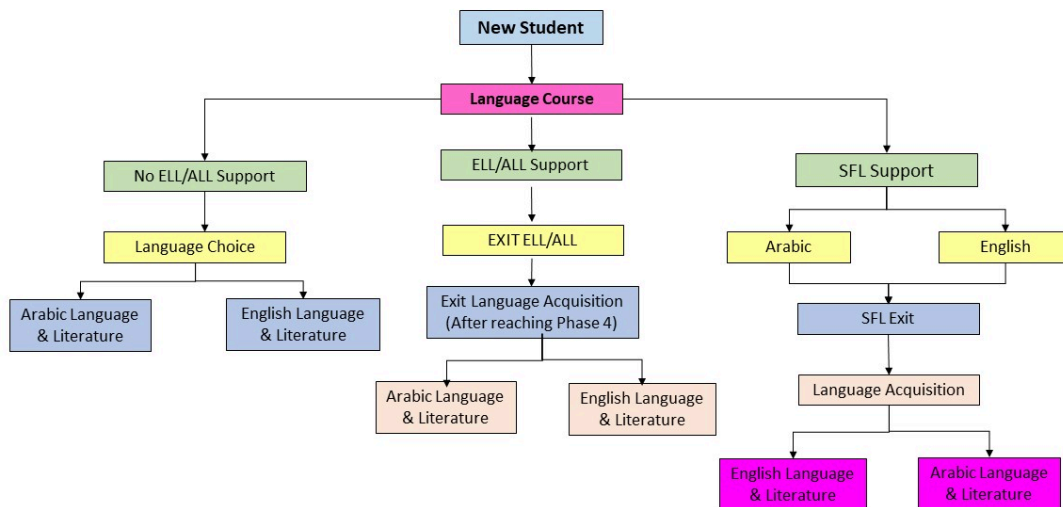
PYP	MYP
English	English Language and Literature
Arabic	Arabic Language and Literature
Support for Learning, SFL and EAL English	Language Acquisition (English)
Support for Learning, SFL Arabic and AAL Arabic	Language Acquisition (Arabic)

Admission Procedure and Languages

For new students entering Digital Private School, they need a basic knowledge of English that will enable them to access the curriculum and have a reasonable prospect of progressing from their time at DPS. Prospective students will take an English Language Entrance Test according to the DPS Admissions Policy. Students also take an Arabic Entrance Test if Arabic is their mother tongue.

Students transitioning from PYP to MYP will not need to undergo the formal English Entrance Test. Instead, their proficiency level will be assessed to ascertain whether they fall under the category of Language Acquisition students and, if so, to determine which phase of MYP they will be placed in.

Language Acquisition and Placement in the MYP



The aims of all MYP subjects state what a teacher may expect to teach and what a student may expect to experience and learn. These aims suggest how the student may be changed by the learning experience. An overarching aim of teaching and learning languages is to enable the student to become a critical and competent communicator.

The aims of the teaching and learning of MYP language acquisition are to:

- gain proficiency in an additional language while supporting maintenance of their mother tongue and cultural heritage
- develop a respect for, and understanding of, diverse linguistic and cultural heritages
- develop the student's communication skills necessary for further language learning, and for study, work and leisure in a range of authentic contexts and for a variety of audiences and purposes
- enable the student to develop multiliteracy skills through the use of a range of learning tools, such as multimedia, in the various modes of communication
- enable the student to develop an appreciation of a variety of literary and non-literary texts and to develop critical and creative techniques for comprehension and construction of meaning
- enable the student to recognize and use language as a vehicle of thought, reflection, self-expression and learning in other subjects, and as a tool for enhancing literacy
- enable the student to understand the nature of language and the process of language learning, which comprises the integration of linguistic, cultural and social components
- offer insight into the cultural characteristics of the communities where the language is spoken
- encourage an awareness and understanding of the perspectives of people from own and other cultures, leading to involvement and action in own and other communities
- foster curiosity, inquiry and a lifelong interest in, and enjoyment of, language learning.

Arabic Language, Social Studies and Islamic Studies at DPS

Oman Ministry of Education (MOE) requires all Omani students and students from other Arabic speaking countries to study Arabic from KG 1 until Grade 12. MOE Supervisors observe the teachers to monitor the students' level in Arabic and to ensure the teachers are following the MOE curriculum expectations. For international students, Arabic is taught as an additional language. The PYP Arabic teachers find ways to integrate their curriculum into the Primary Years Programme (PYP) framework.

The Arabic Language department's vision is to improve the Arabic language abilities of students through developing their basic skills and making links between the curriculum and their daily lives, and to motivate them to learn the Arabic language.

Instructional methods include class discussion, group and team projects, oral presentations, reading, teacher led activities, student led activities, and research. Through classroom activities, students will develop all four areas of language learning: speaking, listening, writing and reading.

Assessment is ongoing and varied throughout the year and includes diagnostic, formative and summative assessments that take the form of speaking and listening tasks (dialogues, interviews, presentations), writing tasks, tests, reading/interpretation of texts, and projects.

It is a Ministry of Education requirement that Arabic is offered for the following number of lessons across the school:

- KG – 1.5 hours per day with the Arabic teacher
- Grade 1 to 2 – 7 lessons of 55 minutes each per week
- Grades 3 to 6 – 6 lessons of 55 minutes each per week
- Grade 7 to 10 – 4 lessons of 55 minutes each per week

Grade 1 to Grade 10 – Arabic as an Additional Language

- Grade 1 to 6 International Students – 5 lessons of 55 minutes each per week
- Grade 7 to 10 International Students – 4 lessons of 55 minutes each per week

Islamic Education subject is mandatory for Muslim students only. We offer the subject in both Arabic and English. Muslim students attend Islamic class as follows:

- Grades 1 to 6 – 3 lessons of 55 minutes each per week
- Grade 7 to 10 – 3 lessons of 55 minutes each per week

Social Studies subject is mandated by the MOE and is taught in Arabic. The Social Studies teacher tries to integrate the MOE curriculum within the PYP POI where possible. For international students, we offer Geography lessons in English.

- Grade 3 to 6 – 1 lesson of 55 minutes per week
- Grade 7 to 10 – 2 lessons of 55 minutes each per week
- Grade 5 to 8 International students receive 2 Geography lessons in English per week

IB Diploma Programme (IB DP)

Every student in the International Baccalaureate (IB) Diploma Programme (DP) studies in both their best language and in other languages taught as a requirement of the programme.

This enables students to:

- Increase their understanding of several cultures, including their own
- Explore globally significant ideas and issues through different languages.

DP students therefore study at least two languages throughout their time in their programme.

Learning a second language

As a requirement of the DP curriculum, every student learns at least one additional language. They could fulfil that requirement through the [studies in language and literature](#) subject group, by taking two courses from the group in two different languages, or through the language acquisition subject group.

In language acquisition, students may choose from:

- Modern languages, learning as beginners or as students with prior experience in that language

Thinking in an additional language

The IB is committed to developing students' knowledge of concepts and cultures, expressed through other languages, as well as teaching those languages to students.

In this way, [Theory of Knowledge \(TOK\)](#) – a component of the DP core – is intimately linked with language acquisition. TOK asks students to reflect on the nature of knowledge, and on how we know what we claim to know. In their study of additional languages, students are encouraged to apply what they learn through TOK.

Studies in language and literature: Group 1

As part of the Diploma Programme (DP), students take at least one subject from studies in language and literature.

[Language A: language and literature](#)

The Language A: language and literature course aims at studying the complex and dynamic nature of language and exploring both its practical and aesthetic dimensions. The course will explore the crucial role language plays in communication, reflecting experience and shaping the world, and the roles of individuals themselves as producers of language. Throughout the course, students will explore the various ways in which language choices, text types, literary forms and contextual elements all affect meaning.

We offer the following Languages at DPS:

- English A: language and literature (HL & SL)
- Arabic A: language and literature (HL & SL)

Language Acquisition: Group 2

It is a requirement of the programme that students study at least one subject from language acquisition.

Language acquisition consists of two modern language courses - language ab initio and language B - designed to provide students with the necessary skills and intercultural understanding to enable them to communicate successfully in an environment where the language studied is spoken.

We offer the following Languages at DPS:

- English B (HL & SL)
- Arabic B (HL & SL)

Language ab initio

Offered at SL only, language ab initio is a language acquisition course designed for students with no previous experience in—or very little exposure to—the target language.

We offer the following Languages at DPS:

- Arabic ab initio SL
- French ab initio and Spanish ab initio by [Pamoja](#)

The proficiency in English of International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (DP)

The IB would strongly encourage universities and colleges that students who have completed one of the English courses are not required to take an additional English language proficiency assessment, such as IELTS or TOEFL, as part of the admissions procedure.

Languages used in daily functions

Arabic and English are the languages of communication at Digital Private School and they are both used for the purpose of daily running of the school, communication and management.

Policy documents are written in English but DPS is working towards translating them into Arabic.

External and internal school communication is done in Arabic and English. Parents who attend meetings with teachers or school administrators can communicate (written and orally) with them in both Arabic and English.

The internal communication within the administration department and support staff (transport, security) is mainly conducted in Arabic in order to ensure the day-to-day running of the support departments.

Support for students who are not proficient in English or Arabic

DPS offers assistance to students facing challenges in communicating fluently or learning effectively in the primary languages of instruction, namely English and Arabic, through the Support for Learning department, as outlined in the Inclusion Policy. The English and Arabic language learning programs are tailored to enhance students' academic communication skills.

Within the MYP, supplementary assistance is extended to students learning English/Arabic as additional languages. These learners enrol in MYP Language Acquisition classes to enhance their academic proficiency in English/Arabic. Placement in these courses is determined through a thorough assessment of student grades, performance on assessments, and teacher recommendations. The primary aim of these classes is to foster the development and enhancement of students' language skills to ensure they possess the necessary academic proficiency for success in their mainstream courses.

As part of the admissions procedure, every student undergoes evaluation to gauge their proficiency in English and Arabic. If a student is admitted to DPS and additional language support is deemed necessary following the admissions testing, further assessments will be conducted to determine their placement and devise a comprehensive plan for effective language acquisition support.

Mother Tongue support

DPS actively promotes the use of mother tongue and we extend comprehensive support to this endeavour by engaging all the stakeholders. We have the following activities during and after school.

- After school language clubs where students could explore the languages of fellow students.
- Books in library in different languages and also online resources
- Inviting parents for storytelling sessions and meeting students
- Morning assemblies, displays around school
- UN Arabic Language Day 18th December
- International Mother Language Day 21st February
- Culture day
- Support from the concerned Embassies/Consulates to promote the language usage.

Host Country Culture

When planning our POI, we try to include our local customs and celebrations in relevant units so we can embrace and uphold the rich cultural heritage of Oman, whilst at the same time making connections to the diverse culture of other countries around the world. We celebrate local occasions like Oman National Day, Ramadan and Eids, Qaranqasho during Ramadan, Oman Teacher's Day. Some of these occasions are celebrated by the whole school as it is part of our values to uphold our Omani heritage.

Communication of the Language Policy

- The Language Policy is available for parents to access via our school website
- Students, parents and teachers will be involved in the review of the Language Policy
- New staff are informed about this policy during orientation sessions at the start of the academic year

Community Involvement

An important part of our vision is seeking opportunities to make links with the local community and its resources (e.g. classroom guests and visits, field trips, businesses and organisations, schools and universities and government agencies). Digital Private School values the local community through its efforts toward bilingualism in school brochures, daily communications, reporting, the promotion of

local celebrations, school assemblies and parent workshops covering various aspects of language teaching.

Links with other DPS policies

Admissions Policy

- KG2 – a basic assessment in English and Arabic to determine the student’s language abilities.
- Grades 1 to 11 - Students will be required to take English and Arabic (mother tongue) entrance tests to assess proficiency in both languages as appropriate. Students who do not meet the minimum requirements may not be admitted to DPS.
- MYP students will be assessed in September each year to determine if they are Language Acquisition students or Language & Literature students.

Inclusion Policy

- Create conditions where all students feel accepted, safe, empowered and supported.

Language Policy Review

The DPS Leadership Team will regularly review the implementation of this Language Policy. Stakeholders in our community i.e. students, parents, teachers, will be asked to contribute during the review cycle through surveys or workshops.

	Created by	Date
	Leadership Team	June 2022
1 st Review	PYP/MYP Language Teachers Leadership Team	January 2024
2 nd Review		January 2025

References

- IBO 2007-2009: Making the PYP Happen
- IBO 2019: Meeting student learning diversity in the Classroom
- IBO 2018: Learning Diversity and Inclusion in IB programmes
- IBO 2008: Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes
- IBO 2008: Guidelines for developing a School Language Policy
- IBO Language and Learning in the IB Programme