

POL/AC018 NLCS Dubai Language Policy – Whole School

Policy Title:	NLCS Dubai Language Policy - Whole School
Policy Number:	POL/AC018
Version:	Version 4
Effective Date:	June 2025
Scheduled Review Date:	June 2028
Supersedes:	Version 3 – Implemented June 2024
Written By:	VP Academic, Head of MFL
Approved By:	Principal, VP Director of Studies, Examinations Officer, Head of Inclusion

1. Purpose

The Purpose of the Language Policy

The purpose of this policy is to articulate our beliefs around language learning and how we intend to implement these through our curriculum. The Language Policy at NLCS Dubai is based on the School's language philosophy, and outlines aims for language teaching and learning.

As an IB school, we believe that development in language is best achieved by; learning language, learning through language and learning about language.

Language Philosophy Statement

The community of North London Collegiate School Dubai is one where multilingualism is embraced and encouraged by students and staff alike. We aim to develop students who are

internationally minded and understand their role within the global community. We recognise that students' mother tongue is integral to their development of language and the protection of their cultural identity. As a school community we provide opportunities for students to share their language and promote intercultural respect and understanding. It is central to our philosophy that all teachers are language teachers.

Principles of Language Teaching and Learning

NLCS Dubai supports the holistic development of students within a positive, safe and caring environment. The language of instruction and primary communication is English. Learning of languages is appropriately differentiated to meet the individual needs of students, both through broad and varied curricular provision and through a highly personalised approach to teaching. As an IB continuum school, teachers support the development of the Learner Profile, through communication skills and attitudes. As a school, we believe that every teacher is a language teacher and thus there is an expectation that all teachers will address language within their own field of specialism.

IB Standards and Practices Relating to Language

Specific IB Standards and Practices that relate to language are:

Standard 03-01 (Culture)

The school implements, communicates and regularly reviews a language policy that helps to foster intercultural understanding through communicating in a variety of ways in more than one language (0301-04)

The school implements and reviews a language policy that is aligned with IB language policy guidelines. (0301-04-0100)

The school describes in its language policy the way that the school recognizes multilingualism as a fact, a right and a resource for learning. (0301-04-0200)

The school identifies in its language policy a variety of physical and virtual resources used to facilitate language development. (0301-04-0300)

The school clearly describes in its language policy the rights and responsibilities of all members of the school community and what constitutes good practice within the school context. (030104-0400)

PYP: The school ensures that students learn a language in addition to the language of instruction, at least from the age of seven; multilingual programmes where students are learning at least two languages can but are not required to offer additional languages. (0301-04-0411)

Standard 04-02 (Students as lifelong learners)

Students take opportunities to develop their language profiles. (0402-07-0300)

Standard 04-03 (Approaches to teaching)

Teachers support language development with consideration for the language profiles of students. (0403-05-0400)

(The above standards are taken from *International Baccalaureate Organization Programme Standards and Practices*. Published October 2018)

Language of Instruction (English)

Language on Admission to NLCS Dubai

English is the language of instruction and the primary language of communication during the school day at NLCS Dubai. It is an additional language for some of the students however the majority of students speak English as their first language.

A student's suitability for the school will be determined through assessments, which may include, but are not limited to, tests of verbal reasoning, non-verbal reasoning, working memory, processing speed, mathematics, essay and interview. Assessments will be conducted in English as that will be the language of instruction at the school; however, the Principal, at his/her sole discretion, may arrange for additional assessments to be conducted in the applicant's native language. (Admissions policy 3.3).

Students from all linguistic backgrounds are considered for admission. Classes in the Junior and Senior school are composed of students with varying levels of English proficiency.

Students study English through the school and students who are not first language English-speakers are supported through the EAL Programme. However, students in Grades 9 and 10 should be proficient in English in order to be registered for the MYP Certificate.

The IB Continuum

There is a structured progressive scope and sequence to effectively prepare students to move between the IB Programmes. Specialist language teachers may teach across all three programmes, facilitating transition. In the case of Arabic, this is taught from pre-KG through to IBDP. Students have the option of choosing French, Spanish, or Mandarin as a second language from Grade 1 onwards. The language chosen in PYP is continued through to MYP 5. In addition to our Modern Foreign Languages provision, students will study Arabic as the language of our host country, as set out below. At Diploma level, all students study either English Literature or English Language and Literature.

Host Country Language – Arabic

The school is committed to providing opportunities for students to engage with their host country. The UAE Ministry of Education mandate the number of Arabic language lessons which must be provided to students in each age group.

The regulations as set out by the MOE are as follows:

If the Private School has any Arab students it shall comply with the following in relation to these students:

- Teach Arabic language books prescribed by the Ministry.
- Teach 6 Arabic language classes per week until 3rd grade, 5 classes per week until 6th grade, after which a minimum of 4 classes per week.

If the Private School has any non-Arab students it shall comply with the following in relation to these students:

- Teach Arabic language books for non-Arab speakers.
- Teach 4 Arabic language classes per week for all grades.

- Arabic language classes are compulsory up to grade 9.
- Private Schools may teach their own Arabic language books after obtaining the Authority's approval.

(Please see Appendix 1 for the Arabic language protocol for placing students in groups.)

Beyond curriculum provision, there are numerous opportunities for students to develop their language skills in the host country's language, for example our participation in the Dubai Literature Festival which involves both Arabic and English-speaking author visits and events. There are also extensive celebrations of the Arabic and UAE culture in response to National Day and other important UAE events.

Modern Foreign Languages (French, Spanish and Mandarin)

Junior School

First School – Grade 1 (PYP)

Modern Foreign Languages classes begin in Grade 1 with a Languages Carousel. Students receive one lesson per week and the classes rotate each term, giving all groups the opportunity to study French, Spanish and Mandarin. On entry to Grade 2, students select one Modern Foreign Language to study and we anticipate that they continue this language through to the end of Grade 5 (and beyond into Senior School).

In Grade 2, the choice of language is from the main three Modern Foreign Languages of the school: French, Spanish and Mandarin (all levels are available from beginner to native speaker).

Lower School – Grade 2 to 5 (PYP)

From Grade 2 to Grade 4 the students have two lessons per week studying the chosen language. This increases to three lessons per week in Grade 5. This increase enables students to feel prepared for the transition from PYP language to MYP language lessons.

Senior School

NLCS Dubai offers the following courses within the Middle Years Programme:

Language and Literature	English French	Arabic German
Language Acquisition Emergent, Capable and Proficient levels	Arabic Spanish	French Mandarin

Grades 6 to 8 (MYP 1-3)

When students transition to the Middle Years Programme, there is an expectation that they will continue with the language studied in PYP years. Within the Modern Foreign Languages Faculty, students have a choice between French, Spanish and Mandarin (Language Acquisition). Students may also take French or German Language and Literature. There are four lessons per fortnight for all courses, regardless of language and level.

Arabic is taught to all students alongside the Modern Foreign Language choice of each student (refer to Arabic section above for details).

Grades 9 and 10 (MYP 4-5)

Following MYP option choices in Grade 8, students begin the final two years of either the Language Acquisition or Language and Literature course in their chosen Modern Foreign Language. For Language Acquisition groups, students are placed in the relevant MYP Language

Acquisition Phase according to their ability and prior learning in the language. At the end of Grade 10, students exit the Language Acquisition course at either Emergent, Capable or Proficient level. Students' language development through the Middle Years Programme prepares them for the skills required in the Diploma Programme. We therefore recommend that students continue to study the same language at Diploma level, as they studied for the Middle Years Programme.

Students who select the French or German (or Arabic) Language and Literature course, will sit the examinations for this course, alongside English Language and Literature. Taking both Language and Literature courses means a student is eligible for a bilingual MYP Diploma.

All students study Arabic in Grade 9, with Arabic passport holders continuing in Grade 10. Non-Arab students have the option to continue their studies to complete the MYP assessment at the end of Grade 10.

Grades 11 and 12 (DP)

NLCS Dubai offers the following courses within the IB Diploma Programme:

Diploma Group	Course	Level Offered
Group 1 Studies in Language and Literature	English Language and Literature	HL/SL
	English Literature	HL/SL
	Arabic Language and Literature	HL/SL
	French Language and Literature	SL
	Spanish Language and Literature	SL
	German Language and Literature	SL
Group 2 Language Acquisition	Arabic Language B	HL / SL
	French Language B	HL / SL
	Spanish Language B	HL / SL
	Mandarin Language B	HL / SL
	French Ab initio	
	Spanish Ab initio	
	Mandarin Ab initio	
	Arabic Ab initio	

At Diploma level, the majority of NLCS Dubai students choose one subject from Group 1 and one from Group 2. However, a student may select two Group 1 subjects. This will make the student eligible for a bilingual IB Diploma. There is no further requirement to take a Group 2 subject (if two subjects are chosen from Group 1). Students may also wish to take two Group 2 languages; this is achievable by using the Group 6 choice for the second language option. The availability of language combinations is adapted each year, based upon the preferences and experience of each new cohort of students.

When entering Diploma Level, we anticipate that students continue with the language studied during the MYP years. Students who complete the MYP Proficient level (Phase 5 & 6) for Language Acquisition can take a Language B course or transfer to Standard Level Language and Literature (if appropriate). Those who complete MYP Capable level (Phase 3 & 4) are expected to continue this language as an IBDP Standard or Higher-Level subject. Students who only complete Language Acquisition Phase 1 are advised to take Ab initio Level in the language. For those who complete Emergent level (Phase 2), the situation will be decided on an individual student basis. In rare cases, it may be appropriate for a student to move to Ab

initio in IBDP; in other cases, the Standard Level course may be more appropriate for a student.

Students who complete MYP Language and Literature courses are expected to transition to Diploma Level Language and Literature courses.

Mother Tongue Programmes and Practice

The majority of our students have the opportunity to study their mother tongue language, with first language classes operating in English, Arabic, Spanish, French, German and Mandarin. These opportunities have been created as the school has responded to the demand from students as the student body has changed over time. If the school does not provide for the student's mother tongue language through the taught curriculum, links are forged between parents, school other educational institutions or embassies to support students in the study of these languages.

The opportunity to complete the Personal Project in a language other than those taught within the curriculum is available to students if there are teachers who are fluent in that language within the staff body.

NLCS Dubai supports the tuition of additional languages within the community, in partnership with parents and external providers. A subscription to Linguascope.com offers language learning in Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Welsh, Urdu and Polish in addition to the languages taught in school. Mother tongue languages are celebrated each year on a dedicated mother tongue day, when students act as teachers to deliver lessons to both peers and staff in their own native language. This is promoted by the Languages Society, a student run group whose role is to promote language learning and the use of mother tongue languages across the school.

Language Learning Challenges

Learning challenges may interfere with the development of receptive and/or expressive language skills (reading, writing, speaking and listening) despite high levels of intelligence. The development of Individual Learning Plans (ILP) and academic action plans helps to support those students facing these challenges. It allows them to identify strengths and weaknesses and also to identify strategies to support their learning of language.

All staff are made aware of students with these challenges and will use strategies to support the students learning. These include differentiation, flexibility in teaching and learning pace and type of instruction. Staff should have an awareness of the meta-cognitive and multi-sensory instruction strategies that can be used. There is a use of a variety of assessment techniques and technology. There is also a dedicated teacher who offers EAL in-class support and advice to teachers, as well as a Head of Inclusion who works with students on an individual basis according to their needs.

Media and Library Resources

At NLCS Dubai we consider the Libraries to be physically and philosophically at the heart of the school. We regard reading as being central to students' literary development. Students learn a love of books and reading as an enjoyable pastime, as well as a means of gathering information. A range of approaches is employed to teach and hone reading skills including regular individual, shared, cooperative and teacher-guided sessions.

The library currently stocks approximately 16,000 items in the English language and 1200 in Arabic, with substantial additions made at the beginning of each academic year. Availability of resources in other languages is also substantial and ever growing. Arabic resources are provided for both native speakers of Arabic and those developing their reading skills, with a levelled reading programme available for students to work through.

There are currently approximately 1400 titles stocked in our libraries in languages other than English or Arabic, covering the majority of mother tongue languages of our students. These include both languages which are taught within our curriculum provision and numerous others which reflect the language profile of the school. The Senior School library has a reference collection, IT books and guides, philosophy and religion, social sciences, languages, natural sciences, technology, arts and music, literature, humanities, geography, history and biographies. There are also electronic links to e-resources: periodicals, newspapers, dictionaries, e-books, databases, which are multilingual in order to support the mother language and expand the resources. The school subscribes to the school version of Encyclopedia Britannica, online journal collection JSTOR as well as a substantial range of periodicals and newspapers in both English and Arabic.

The media resources include other resources such as Lightbox (a fully interactive, multidimensional, supplemental educational tool to improve engagement and literacy skills).

Our Libraries are comfortable, quiet areas for students to lose themselves in a book or to carry out research in support of their studies. The Libraries host many events including visits by

authors and informal talks about books by teachers and students. There are also areas dedicated to The IB Learner Profile, and specific Units of Inquiry, for all the IB Programmes, which are updated regularly.

Communication of the NLCS Dubai Language Policy

The NLCS Dubai language policy forms part of the new teaching staff induction process, ensuring that all teachers understand the expectations and philosophy surrounding language teaching. Parents have access to the document through the school website. Parents information sessions focusing on the IB programmes also highlights Language and the philosophy of the school.

Language Policy Review

The Pedagogical Leadership Team regularly reviews the implementation of the language policy in lessons and across the school. The Assistant Principal (Academic) leads a biennial review the NLCS Language Policy in line with the policy review cycle. This process involves the PYP Coordinator, MYP Coordinator, DP Coordinator, Head of Modern Foreign Languages and the Deputy Head of the Junior School.

References

International Baccalaureate. (Published September 2020. Updated January 2021, March 2021). *Diploma Programme Assessment procedures 2021* Geneva: International Baccalaureate organisation.

International Baccalaureate. (2021). *Middle Years Programme Assessment procedures*. (Published September 2020, Updated January 2021. Geneva: International Baccalaureate organisation.

International Baccalaureate. (Published May 2014. Updated September 2014, September 2017, April 2021). *MYP: From Principles into Practice For use from September 2014/January 2015*. Geneva: International Baccalaureate Organisation.

International Baccalaureate. (2017). *Primary Years Programme, Coordinator's handbook 2013–2014: Northern hemisphere: September 2013–August 2014, Southern hemisphere: January 2014–December 2014*. Geneva: International Baccalaureate organisation.

Knowledge and Human Development Authority (2020). *United Arab Emirates School Inspection Framework*. Dubai: Knowledge and Human Development Authority

Appendix 1 – Arabic Language Placement Protocol

Language encompasses both vocabulary and grammatical structures. As our students progress through various phases, they will employ language that reflects increasingly sophisticated and complex levels of proficiency.

- All newly enrolled students at the school are required to undergo a diagnostic screening test designed to ascertain the appropriate level and class placement. Should a student surpass the expected level in the initial screening, they will be administered a higher-level assessment to accurately determine the corresponding language phase.
- All screening tests are evaluated against the Ministry of Education (MOE) language standards for both Arabic A (for students registered at the school/KHDA under an Arab passport) and Arabic B (for students registered at the school/KHDA under any other nationality)*.
- The school emphasizes the importance of learning the mother tongue in addition to the language of instruction. All NLCS students are encouraged to enroll in any language course regardless of their registered nationality or passport; however, achieving the minimum expected level in the screening test is mandatory.
- The decision to admit a student to a specific course is made by a committee comprised of four members: the Director of MOE Subjects, the Head of Arabic, the Arabic A Teacher, and the Arabic B Teacher.
- The Head of Department convenes the committee to review the screening results of new students and to listen to any audio recordings (speaking assessments) for moderation purposes.

Post-Result Procedure

Regular Stream for Arabic A and B

The regular stream refers to students who are placed in a class that corresponds to the typical academic progression for Arabic B. For Arabic A, this designation applies to students who possess no significant gaps in their prior learning or only minor gaps from the previous academic year, which do not impede their access to the curriculum.

Arabic A (Heritage A)

Arabic A (Heritage A) designates students who have learning gaps exceeding one year of skills as per the MOE language standards (National Document for Learning Arabic).

Acceleration Courses for Arabic B

Acceleration courses for new students in Arabic B refer to classes where students are placed in a course that does not align with their previous years of study, with the objective of addressing learning gaps from prior years and facilitating their return to the appropriate class level.

Individual Education Plan (IEP)

The primary purpose of an IEP is to provide students with the necessary support to facilitate their academic growth. It includes measurable objectives that are regularly monitored and adjusted to reflect the student's progress. The IEP will be structured to align with the estimated timeframe.

Observation

The Head of Arabic, in collaboration with the Director of MOE Subjects, conducts regular learning walks for both direct and indirect observation across all groups to ensure that teachers adhere to the agreed-upon plans.

Entering and Exiting the Support Classes

There is no predetermined timeframe for entering or exiting a course. Students may transition as soon as they have achieved the assigned targets. The proposed timeframe may vary based on the progression of the student.

The definitions for Arabic A and B are in accordance with Article (18) of the Executive Council Resolution (2) of 2017.

Appendix 2 – Whole School Mother Tongue Language Profile

Language	Proportion of Students
English	54.7%
Arabic	8.8%
Mandarin	6.3%
French	6.1%
Urdu	3.7%
Korean	3.6%
Hindi	2.7%
Gujarati	1.9%
German	1.8%
Portuguese	1.6%
Russian	1.6%
Spanish	1.2%
Turkish	0.9%
Italian	0.6%
Greek	0.5%
Danish	0.4%
Dutch	0.4%
Farsi	0.4%
Hungarian	0.4%
Malayalam	0.4%
Japanese	0.3%
Marathi	0.3%
Swahili	0.3%
Bulgarian	0.2%

Punjabi	0.2%
Telugu	0.2%
Tulu	0.2%
Assamese	0.1%
Tamil	0.1%